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Near East & South Asia

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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-95-002 *4 January 1995*

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Egyptian-Israeli-Palestinian Talks Continue

Musa, Peres Discuss PA, Obstacles

NC0301124395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1211 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa began a session of talks with Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres today. They are due to discuss developments in the peace process, ways of eliminating the obstacles confronting the Palestinian Authority [PA], and the manner in which the PA can expand its functions in the autonomous areas. The Musa-Peres meeting is part of Egypt's efforts to boost the peace negotiations on all tracks.

MENA has learned that if progress is made in the negotiations, another tripartite session of talks will be held. Dr. Nabil Sha'th, PA minister of planning and international cooperation, will join this tripartite meeting if it is held. The expansion of the PA's functions in the autonomous areas will be discussed.

Musa Comments on Peres-Mubarak Talks

NC0301123095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1010 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa reported that today Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres briefed President Husni Mubarak on developments in the peace negotiations on the Syrian and Palestinian tracks and informed him of the Israeli viewpoint on the course of the peace operation.

Musa, who was commenting on the two-and-one-half hour meeting that President Mubarak held with Peres, said that the Israeli foreign minister listened to President Mubarak and the Egyptian views on the peace process.

Musa said that the talks continued through a working breakfast this morning.

Musa emphasized Egypt's concern for the peace process, particularly the Palestinian track. He explained that Egypt wants the peace operation to be able to face the well-known challenges and problems and is also concerned about the slow pace of negotiations on the Syrian track.

He added that the talks between President Mubarak and Peres dealt with several other issues, noting that Peres asked questions about Alexandria's tripartite summit. Musa described Peres' interest in this issue as "legitimate" because everyone inside and outside the region is asking us about the results of the minisummit and its expected consequences.

The Egyptian foreign minister pointed out that the Mubarak-Peres talks also dealt with nuclear nonproliferation in the region.

He said that he will hold a meeting with Shim'on Peres at the Foreign Ministry later today to continue discussing the details of the issues already raised.

Musa welcomed Peres' visit to Cairo, noting that the issues that are being discussed are very important. He expressed confidence that there will be progress in the peace negotiations, especially in light of remarks made by Peres to Egyptian officials. Musa noted that there are many opportunities that can be seized in the peace process.

Meanwhile, Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres was asked if he still harbors suspicions that Syria exerted pressure during the tripartite summit to prevent the Gulf countries from hastily normalizing relations with Israel. He answered that he had listened to President Mubarak's views on this issue, noting that the president assured him that Alexandria's summit was not designed to halt or slow down the peace process but to give it fresh impetus.

Peres declared: Egypt, like us, feels that the time has come to make peace between Israel and Syria.

Peres added that President Mubarak showed interest in the progress of the second stage of Palestinian-Israeli negotiations. Noting that Egypt played a major role in the first stage of those talks, Peres remarked: We would like Egypt to play the same role in the second stage. We also welcome an Egyptian role in our negotiations with Syria.

Peres continued: As I was given to understand, no step will be taken at the expense of another. Likewise, there will be no linkage between progress on one front and progress on another. We must make progress toward peace wherever we find an opportunity to do so. Afterwards, we can begin to discuss methods of organizing economic cooperation in a way that will benefit all the nations of the Middle East, not just one country.

Peres added: I believe that Egypt should also play a major role in the economic sphere. We feel that we are part of the Middle East but not the region's leaders. Egypt must continue to play the regional pioneer role. This is something natural that we do not deny but must indeed support.

Responding to a question from an Israeli journalist about reports that the Egyptian policy toward Israel recently has been described as hostile, 'Amr Musa said: I believe you behave strangely over any differences in views between the two countries. You always describe the relations between Egypt and Israel as good sometimes and as bad some other times depending on whether we differ or agree. You must understand that any differences in our views with you do not mean that we are enemies. It is not incumbent upon us to agree with everything that you believe. Moreover, we will not agree

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with everything that you believe. Likewise, we do not say that you must agree with everything we believe.

The foreign minister continued: We differ with Israel over the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and over the nuclear issue in the Middle East. He said: We differ politically. But we have our way to discuss these differences. Perhaps we might work out a solution and an agreement. We might not achieve anything. In this case, we must adopt the stances that are compatible with the situation. Do not think that whenever we say no or whenever we differ with you that we are against you. You must change your attitude because it is wrong. I do not want to use other descriptions.

Replying to another question about the possibility of achieving progress in relations between Egypt and Israel in fields other than economic ones, 'Amr Musa said: We must do everything possible to bolster the bilateral relations in all walks of life.

Asked to comment on Egypt's belief that a peace agreement should be reached in the Middle East before the Arab boycott of Israel is lifted, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said: We need to achieve a comprehensive peace as soon as possible. Regarding the issue of normalization, this was dealt with by the Gulf Cooperation Council and it is up to the Arab League to decide on the Arab boycott of Israel. Musa added that if some Arab countries want to discuss this issue, Egypt is ready for that. Egypt has no problem on this issue because there is no boycott between Egypt and Israel. It is not up to us but to the other Arab countries that continue to boycott Israel, he said.

In his remarks, the foreign minister said: We support economic relations with Israel. I receive reports from businessmen about various restrictions facing the export of Egyptian products to Israel, trade exchange with it, and even investment in Israel. Likewise, we also received complaints from your end about some restrictions facing Israeli investors. These are examples of what we are discussing to eliminate the impediments and elevate the trade and investment exchanges between us.

Asked by an Israeli journalist if Egypt is playing a role in slowing down the normalization of relations between Israel and the Gulf states, just as it did with Djibouti and the Comoro Islands, 'Amr Musa said: I am afraid that you create events and then start believing in them, making your calculations accordingly. This is the first time that I have heard about the issue of Djibouti. 'Amr Musa wondered if Egypt was behind the break in diplomatic relations between Israel and Djibiuti or the Comoro Islands.

Asked about improving relations with Egypt and whether he felt that recent developments have effected them, the Israeli foreign minister replied that Israel has full confidence in President Mubarak, who has explained his viewpoint and Egypt's stance on the summit. I am satisfied, he said. You know that many stories were circulated. But I see nothing that prevents Egypt and Israel from reaching a complete understanding, he said.

Peres added that Egypt and Israel are concerned with two main things. The first is to achieve peace in the region and the second is to raise their peoples' standard of living. These are the two main issues and whoever fails to understand them does not understand the goal of modern diplomacy, Peres remarked.

I repeat what Mr. 'Amr Musa said: Our differences do not take a military but a diplomatic form. This is part of the normalization process, he explained.

Asked whether Egypt will continue to make efforts along the Palestinian track, Minister Musa said that this will indeed happen. However, he denied that an Egyptian delegation is taking part in the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations.

Minister Musa was asked whether the talks had touched on the future Israeli settlement policy, since that topic will be discussed during the final phase of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations. He replied: We understand that there will be no new settlements. This was the framework we understood when the Oslo agreement was signed. He added that the addition of any settlement will create considerable tension in the Palestinian-Israeli relations, as well as the Arab-Israeli relations.

The foreign minister affirmed that Egypt views the issue of settlements as unlawful and as an obstacle to peace. This is a clear point that has already been conveyed to Shim'on Peres. The Israeli Government's position is represented in the suspension of construction work. There is no problem at the moment concerning this situation in particular, Musa said.

Asked whether at today's meeting Peres expressed the Israeli Government's intention to stop settlement building, 'Amr Musa said that when the Israeli decision was made it took into consideration not only reactions but also the framework within which the Palestinian-Israeli peace could be achieved, as well as other points. The reply we got from Peres today is reassuring, Musa said.

'Amr Musa was asked whether the issue of the U.S. loan to Israel was discussed, the loan that the United States demanded not be used for settlement building. The foreign minister said that the issue was not discussed with Peres but that it can be discussed with the United States if the matter is raised.

Asked whether Egypt will be subjected to sanctions if it refrains from signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, Musa said: If Israel has not signed the treaty and has not been subjected to sanctions, why would such sanctions be imposed on others? We will sign the chemical weapons treaty only within the framework we have explained, Musa said.

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Sha'th on Israel's 'Illegal Measures'

NC0301142695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1300 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa held a luncheon for Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of international cooperation in the Palestinian Authority.

Sha'th said the Palestinian-Israeli Liaison Committee will meet this afternoon amid frenzied Israeli measures.

He said Israel yesterday killed four Palestinian soldiers without any rightful reason. Israel is also taking illegal measures in Jerusalem and in the occupied Palestinian territories, he added. He said the Liaison Committee will discuss these issues.

Peres, Shahal Comment on Negotiations

NC0301163795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1410 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Jan (MENA)—Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has said that his meeting with President Husni Mubarak today was extremely important, allowing future momentum in the negotiations with the Palestinians and the Syrians to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

He told reporters after a meeting with members of the U.S.-Egyptian Chamber of Commerce that President Mubarak had told him that the Alexandria summit will not slow the normalization between the Arab countries and Israel.

He expected the second half of this year to be extremely important for the peace process and for Israel itself.

Peres said Egypt basically supports the Syrian position on the need for Israel's withdrawal from the territories occupied after the June 1967 war, and President Mubarak is fully confident that President Hafiz al-Asad is committed to the peace process.

Peres said that President Mubarak also denies President al-Asad or King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz of Saudi Arabia have any intention to take any steps against Israel or to slow down the peace process.

He said Egypt's policy seeks to achieve progress on all negotiating tracks, and that it is against making progress on one track to the exclusion of the others.

Peres regretted the human losses from the shooting at policemen and civilians near Gaza, but said the Israeli forces' entry into Palestinian National Authority regions in pursuit of Palestinians is not a violation of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement. He pointed out that the security agreement between Israel and the Palestinians includes such a clause.

Peres hoped the incident will not affect the talks that will be held later today by the Palestinian-Israeli Liaison Committee. He said: We have to continue the negotiations. I cannot see why they should be stopped, and we have to spare them any side effects."

Israeli Police Minister Moshe Shahal, who is accompanying Peres, said that Egypt and President Mubarak are concerned about advancing the peace process.

He said today's meeting with President Mubarak and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa gives new impetus and spirit to Egypt's current and future role.

He said: Egypt helped us explain our position to the Syrians and to the Arab countries.

Shahal described the talks which Israeli President 'Ezer Weisman recently held in Cairo as extremely important and said they achieved some amount of understanding.

He said: We appreciate Egypt's help in making progress along the Palestinian track of the peace process.

He said today's talks with President Mubarak and Minister Musa give Egypt the recognition it deserves because it can play an important role in the important issue that is still ahead of us—negotiations with the Syrians. He hoped progress will be achieved in these negotiations.

In his remarks at the meeting with members of the American- Egyptian Chamber of Commerce, the Israeli foreign minister said the time has come for building a new Middle East based on cooperation and peace, with no more wars or poverty.

Our choice today, he said, is to join the civilized march, not to return to the Middle Ages. He said time is extremely important: The Middle East should either enter the new age quickly, like the Asian countries did, or move backward, as is happening with some African countries. Peres stressed that Israel wants a Middle East peace.

He said: Let us leave the boycott behind and begin cooperation, let us open the closed border and fight poverty and fundamentalism with progress, free trade, and investments.

He said Israel will not introduce nuclear weapons to the Middle East, and he described reports of Israel's possession of nuclear weapons as "rumors".

Sha'th, Peres, Musa Meet Over Lunch

TA0301173295 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 3 Jan 95

[Report by political correspondent Udi Segal in Cairo—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] The meeting of the Israeli-Palestinian Liaison Committee in Cairo was preceded by a tripartite meeting over lunch at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry attended by Dr. Nabil

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Sha'th, Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, and Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa. Peres presented the Israeli proposal to split the negotiations into an open debate about the elections which would continue in Cairo and high-level contacts between Rabin, Peres, and 'Arafat concerning the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment.

The negotiations with the Palestinians was the main topic of interest to Egyptian President Husni Mubarak in his meeting with Minister Peres. He urged Peres to promote the interim arrangement, and said that the success of the negotiations with the Palestinians will also affect the negotiations with Syria.

Mubarak and Peres met for about 45 minutes in private, and the negotiations with Syria was one of the key issues raised in the meeting. At the end of the session, Mubarak told Israeli correspondents that al-Asad wants peace. [passage omitted]

Peres reacted to Mubarak's remarks, explaining that the main thing he had heard from him was a clarification of the Syrian position.

[Begin recording] [Peres] He said that al-Asad had made a strategic decision and that he thinks we must respond to it. We said that we have previous experience with Egypt, whereby the peace process was tested over a period of time and was not executed all at once, which is exactly what we are telling the Syrians.

[Segal] Did you hear anything new about the Syrian position, about what al-Asad said?

[Peres] It had to do more with a deeper understanding of his words than with anything new. [end recording]

Peres said he was pleased with Mubarak's briefing on the summit of Arab leaders in Alexandria. Mubarak told Peres that the summit had not been an attempt to freeze the normalization between Israel and Arab and Muslim countries. Mubarak told Israeli journalists that contrary to what had been reported in Israel, the Alexandria summit was not aimed against Israel.

Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said that even if Israel and Egypt have different opinions it does not mean that Egypt is acting against Israel. That is a very erroneous approach, Musa said.

Sha'th, Peres, Musa Comment After Talks

NC0301175895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1625 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stressed that the recent tripartite Arab summit in Alexandria was not directed against the peace process, but indeed supported peace efforts.

Although the summit is an Arab affair, he said, it is so important that it must have repercussions at the regional level and even beyond.

This is why non-Arab circles are interested in the results of the summit, he said, noting that these results were discussed with Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres today.

Musa was speaking at a joint news conference with Shim'on Peres and Dr. Nabil Sha'th, Palestinian minister of planning and international cooperation after their three-way meeting today.

The foreign minister said the tripartite summit did not oppose the peace process. On the contrary, it presumed that peace is coming and that negotiations must succeed on the basis of land for peace.

Asked about Middle East arms control, Musa said that this topic was raised during the meeting between President Mubarak and Shim'on Peres, and it was also discussed at the meeting at the Foreign Ministry. He said Egypt still believes that this topic is extremely important.

He added: There is enough time to discuss this issue and try to reach a clear policy on how to deal with it in accordance with the principles declared by Egypt.

The foreign minister explained that this subject is still being discussed, and will continue to be a topic for discussion in the next few days and weeks.

On President Mubarak's announcement that Egypt will not sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty if Israel fails to sign it, Musa said President Mubarak's announcement represents Egypt's position. He noted that President Mubarak also said that talks with Israel will continue, not in order to reach a compromise but to reach a just and comprehensive solution to this problem.

On the idea of Israel joining the Mediterranean Forum, Shim'on Peres said Israel does wish to join this group. Egypt told us it will support this request, he said.

Musa commented that the Forum is open to all Mediterranean countries, including Israel if it wishes to join. He said Egypt supports expanding the membership of the Forum to include all Mediterranean states.

He said Egypt is discussing the membership of Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine. He noted that new members need the approval of the foreign ministers of the Forum countries.

Musa said the Egyptian, Palestinian, and Israeli delegations discussed over a working luncheon general issues and problems hindering the achievement of peace and progress in the negotiations for peace.

He said the Palestinian and Israeli delegations will continue their official talks.

Peres noted that a number of civilian powers have been transferred to the Palestinian Authority despite the difficulties during the initial phase.

Asked about Israel's killing of the Palestinian soldiers, Dr. Nabil Sha'th said: There is no doubt that there is a

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crisis before this convening of the Liaison Committee. We came to see what we can do to successfully continue the peace process on the Palestinian track and surmount the Israeli obstacles.

Sha'th stressed that the settlements are a major obstacle, and so are Israel's measures in Jerusalem, the killing this morning [as received] of Palestinian soldiers, and the conditions of the 6,000 Palestinian prisoners. He stressed the importance of removing these obstacles so that discussions on the implementation of the second phase of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement can continue.

Despite these crises, Sha'th said, the Palestinians have not reached the point of breaking off the negotiations. He said the Palestinians are eager for the talks to succeed despite the slow pace of the peace process.

Liaison Committee Begins Meetings

NC0301170795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1605 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Jan (MENA)—The Joint Palestinian-Israeli Liaison Committee began meeting here this evening amid tension and concern because of the martyrdom of three Palestinian soldiers and three citizens by the Israeli occupation forces last night and the kidnapping of an Israeli soldier by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] today. Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation heads the Palestinian side and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres heads the Israeli side. The Israeli delegation includes Police Minister Moshe Shahal. The committee meeting was preceded by a meeting between Sha'th and Peres to review the topics that the committee will discuss.

Sha'th Confirms 'Crisis' in Peace Process

NC0301180995 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1640 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Jan (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning in the Palestinian National Authority [PA] and chairman of the Palestinian delegation to the Palestinian-Israeli Liaison Committee meeting, has affirmed that the Palestinian side is currently investigating the circumstances surrounding the murder yesterday of six Palestinians, including three policemen, by Israeli troops within the PA's area of jurisdiction.

In a statement today, Sha'th said that he has not received any information so far on the ongoing investigation in this connection, pointing out that he has no information on new operations today.

We meet today with a strong feeling that a crisis will emerge. I would not be honest if I said that things were going along fine, Sha'th added.

In his statements, Sha'th said that the second phase of Palestinian-Israeli negotiations concerning the completion of the peace process is going through a severe crisis involving both Jerusalem and the entire process.

He added that this stage has already been delayed for seven months, particularly in connection with the legislative elections. There is also a delay in the withdrawal of the Israeli troops from the Palestinian villages and cities as well as in the release of the 5,000 Palestinian detainees, he said, adding that the Israeli side has not shown any inclination to release those detainees.

Sha'th pointed out that the Liaison Committee meeting confirms the existence of that crisis on the Palestinian track. He noted that the committee will discuss ways to emerge from the crisis rather than ways to sustain the peace process and hold successful negotiations. He said that the Palestinians want answers from the Israeli side on this.

Prior to the committee meeting, Sha'th affirmed that he had no information on the kidnapping of an Israeli soldier today. Israeli Minister of Police Moshe Shahal, chairman of the Israeli delegation to the meeting, confirmed that Israel was conducting checks to verify the kidnapping.

Liaison Committee Talks Said Deadlocked

NC0301205695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2005 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa this evening participated in the Palestinian-Israeli Liaison Committee meetings currently being held in Cairo under Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation in the Palestinian Authority; and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres in an attempt to bring the views of the two sides closer after the talks reached a deadlock.

The situation in the Palestinian territory—notably the killing of six Palestinians, including three policemen, Hamas' [Islamic Resistance Movement] claim to have kidnapped an Israeli soldier today, and the Israeli settlers' continuation of establishing a new quarter in the Efrat settlement near Bethlehem—overshadowed the negotiations and caused a deadlock.

A responsible Palestinian source said that the Israelis have not given any reply to questions that the Palestinian side previously put regarding the holding of legislative elections in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the withdrawal of the Israeli army from villages and towns of the West Bank, and the early transfer of power to the Palestinian side in the West Bank. Musa is scheduled to hold another meeting with the Israeli delegation later this evening to discuss Egyptian-Israeli relations. The Israeli-Palestinian Liaison Committee will then resume its discussions until late tonight.

Rabin-'Arafat Meeting at Erez Announced

TA0401060895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Yasir 'Arafat will meet at the Erez checkpoint next

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week. This was announced by Shim'on Peres and Nabil Sha'th, the heads of the Israeli-Palestinian liaison committee, at the end of yesterday's talks in Cairo.

Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that the Palestinians demanded a halt to construction in East Jerusalem and settlement expansion. Minister Peres said that as far as Jerusalem is concerned, this issue will be discussed only in the talks on the permanent arrangement. The Palestinians also demanded the release of more security prisoners. Police Minister Moshe Shahal, who participated in the talks for the first time yesterday, promised to look into the matter.

[A related report by Arye Gus on Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0505 GMT on 4 January adds that "for its part, Israel presented a series of security complaints, as summed up by Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres." In a recorded passage, Peres says: "We expect the Palestinian Authority [PA] to do more on security issues in order to safeguard personal safety. We pointed out that there were seven shooting incidents in the Gaza Strip this week. We are not asking the PA to be responsible for security in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv. We ask and demand that they take responsibility for security in the Gaza Strip. In our opinion, we have not witnessed any proper effort on their part, in accordance with the Declaration of Principles, to prevent these security violations. We told them that the more determination the Palestinians display in fighting terror, the easier it will be for us to meet some of their demands."

[Gus notes that "Israel demanded that the Palestine National Council convene to discuss the annulment of the anti-Israel clauses in the Palestinian Covenant. At the same time, Israel announced a series of facilitative measures, such as issuing another 4,000 work permits, increasing the number of students allowed to study in the West Bank, and a promise to consider the release of additional prisoners."]

Peres, Sha'th Hold News Conference

NC0401063795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2315 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Jan (MENA)—Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has stated that his country is committed to halting the establishment of new settlements and refraining from seizing land to expand the current settlements. He said that the Israeli Government will not allocate any funds to the settlements.

These statements were made during a joint news conference he held with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation in the Palestinian Authority, at the end of the Palestinian-Israeli Liaison Committee meetings that went on for eight hours interspersed with a meeting between Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Peres. Peres said that these resolutions on the settlements were approved by the Israeli Government during its last meeting.

Peres said that an agreement has been reached to hold two summit meetings between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Rabin next week and the week after. After the summit meetings, members of the Palestinian and Israeli delegations will hold two meetings to discuss the agreements that will be reached at the two summits regarding the early transfer of power, release of Palestinian detainees, holding of legislative elections, the roads that link Gaza and Jericho to neighboring countries, and the redeployment of Israeli forces in the West Bank.

Dr. Sha'th called on Israel to immediately release 6,000 Palestinian detainees. He noted that of these detainees 700 have actually signed a pledge not to resort to violence but Israel has not released them. He said that the majority of the detainees are Fatah and not Hamas members, as Israel claims. He stressed that the Israeli side has not presented any proposals on the redeployment of Israeli forces or the holding of elections. He noted that it only makes verbal pledges on a continuing commitment to the peace process. He threatened to withdraw from chairing the Palestinian delegation in the next round of talks if no progress is made regarding the release of the male and female detainees, noting that Israel has not given any justification for their continued detention.

Dr. Sha'th stressed that the Liaison Committee met today amid an atmosphere of concern as a result of the killing of three Palestinian soldiers in Gaza. He said: We are waiting for the results of the investigation that will be conducted by a joint Palestinian-Israeli committee to determine responsibility for the incident. He noted that the incident is serious and must not happen again. He pointed out that the Cairo agreement does not give Israel the right to hunt down suspects inside Palestinian territory, as it claims. He emphasized that the Palestinian legislative elections must not be delayed until May of 1995. He said that the peace process will continue, noting that there has been a longer delay in this issue than was originally scheduled. He praised Egypt's efforts in boosting the peace process and defending the Palestinians' rights. He stressed that the Palestinian delegation's presence in Egypt is a source of confidence and reassurance.

Musa, Peres Discuss Settlements

NC0401064295 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2318 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Jan (MENA)—Diplomatic sources have told MENA that Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa had a firm discussion with his Israeli counterpart, Shim'on Peres, on the issue of Israeli settlements and the importance of halting them. These sources affirmed that Musa told Peres that Egypt is very concerned that Israel should not encourage the establishment of settlements and that this issue not only involves the Palestinians but also Egypt and the entire Arab world. These sources also said that the issue of Israel

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signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty was also broached at the meeting. Musa pointed out to Peres that Egypt wants Israel to take initial steps in this direction.

It is worth noting that Israel has not signed this treaty. Peres today described reports that Israel possesses an arsenal of nuclear weapons as mere "rumors," despite reports that Israel has more than 300 nuclear warheads.

Interim Accord To Be Negotiated

TA0401111295 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 4 Jan 95 pp A1, A2

[Report by correspondent Aluf Ben in Cairo]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians will resume next week. Palestinian Authority [PA] Chairman Yasir 'Arafat will meet with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin in order to discuss the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment in the West Bank and security arrangements. At the same time, delegations from the two sides will hold discussions in Cairo on elections in the territories and economic cooperation.

Sources in the Israeli delegation said yesterday that Israel and the Palestinians will negotiate a comprehensive interim arrangement. Elections in the territories and a significant IDF redeployment outside West Bank population centers will take place only after such an agreement is signed. The gradual implementation of some parts of the interim arrangement, such as a partial withdrawal from Palestinian towns or the transfer of additional powers to the PA within the framework of early empowerment, may take place during the negotiations.

According to the sources, in the contacts held so far, the Palestinians categorically rejected the idea of holding elections while the IDF remains in West Bank population centers or implements a temporary withdrawal. [passage omitted]

Peres, Delegation Leave

NC0401064995 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2321 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Jan (MENA)—Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres left Cairo for Israel tonight accompanied by the delegation to the Palestinian-Israeli Liaison Committee meetings after a one-day visit to Egypt. President Husni Mubarak received Peres during his visit. Peres also held talks with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa. Peres was seen off at the airport by ambassador Hasan al-'Ujayzi, assistant to the foreign minister and director of the Protocol Department, and Israeli Ambassador in Cairo David Sultan.

Israel Said Ready To Hold Talks With Lebanon

TA0301180295 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 3 Jan 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Political sources in Jerusalem have said that Israel is ready to resume peace talks with Lebanon in the presence of military personnel from both countries—on the pattern of the talks that are being conducted with Syria.

The sources told our political affairs correspondent Shlomo Ganor that the current visit to Washington by a Lebanese military delegation, led by the Lebanese deputy chief of staff, provides a good opportunity to hold talks.

The sources pointed out that the Israeli and Syrian ambassadors in Washington will meet this week to continue the dialogue between them and determine a date for high-ranking officers from both countries to join the talks over security arrangements on the Golan Heights.

Inter-Arab Affairs

League Chief Expects Arab Summit 'Next February'

MM0301161095 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 1 Jan 95 p4

[Interview with Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid by Sawsan Abu-Husayn in Cairo; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Abu-Husayn] Although there was emphasis throughout the last two months of 1994 on the importance of supporting and developing the Arab League, the Alexandria summit has had a widespread impact regarding the desperate need for a revitalization of the league. Can we say that the tripartite summit in Alexandria succeeded in reviving the Arab League?

['Abd-al-Majid] First of all, the tripartite summit's clear support for the Arab League was much more than just revitalization. What we have here is a new kind of Arab action with special significance and indications that will herald some considerable change in the Arab region. It was an important summit at Arab, regional, and international levels. That will soon be reflected in Arab decisionmaking. [passage omitted]

[Abu-Husayn] In your view, could that summit be seen as a prelude to an Arab summit conference in the first half of the new year?

['Abd-al-Majid] Yes, and we should feel reassured about the major role played by Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Egypt. I expect a summit conference to be held next February.

[Abu-Husayn] Should we view that information as a certainty?

['Abd-al-Majid] That is not information but rather a conclusion I discerned during and after the Alexandria tripartite summit.

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[Abu-Husayn] What are the indications that an Arab summit conference will be held?

['Abd-al-Majid] What is new this time is that what we have is not indications but determination and insistence underlining the importance of holding such a conference to discuss fundamental issues and draw up a comprehensive strategy focusing on the following:

1. The higher Arab interests.
2. A unified Arab position on the peace challenges.
3. Regional cooperation and its limits.

[Abu-Husayn] Will the general Arab summit discuss the question of developing the Arab League?

['Abd-al-Majid] No, Arab League development will be discussed at the foreign ministers conference next March.

[Abu-Husayn] On the basis of your recent contacts with some Arab states, what about the proposal urging more powers for the Arab League secretary general along the same lines as the United Nations?

['Abd-al-Majid] All the Arab states are willing to support and work for the development of the Arab League. The final elements regarding the position of the league will crystallize at the foreign ministers meeting in March. I have given the Arab states my own concept for developing the Arab League by adding appendixes on the questions of voting on resolutions, giving the secretary general more powers, creating an Arab court of justice, and reviewing the league's administrative structure. [passage omitted]

[Abu-Husayn] It seems that the Alexandria tripartite summit moved toward giving the Arab League secretary general the powers, or some of the powers, you have been talking about, such as authorizing you to hold contacts with a view to clearing the Arab atmosphere. Do you not think so?

['Abd-al-Majid] [Egyptian] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa will be in continuous contact with me for consultation, coordination, and agreement on what should next be done to initiate Arab reconcilations. Let me just recall the fact that I raised the principle of reconciliation and frankness as far back as 1993. Today we see this as profoundly evident and we see the Arab interest in it. I am fully confident that this step will be completed not for the sake of reconciliation as such but to safeguard the vital Arab interest and future. [passage omitted]

[Abu-Husayn] Do you believe that the time has come to overcome the differences over the second Gulf war crisis?

['Abd-al-Majid] The new political reality necessitates that. The Casablanca summit meetings had a calming effect different from the past. The Iraqi delegation noticeably spoke a different language it had not used before. Its 10-minute speech focused entirely on the importance of good-neighborliness and respect for the sovereignty and independence of other states. We see that as progress. Some steps remain to be taken and we hope that will be done in the next phase. [passage omitted]

Says Summit Now 'Out of the Question'

NC0301141495 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has said that holding an Arab summit is currently out of the question because the circumstances are not favorable. He said the call for a summit is the right of the Arab leaders, not of the Arab League.

He told the Kuwaiti newspaper AL-ANBA' today that the recent tripartite summit in Alexandria was an important turning point in the Arab situation at all levels and will positively reflect on the Arab world. He said the summit opened the door for clearing the Arab air and for taking positions on recent developments in the peace process and the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

'Abd-al-Majid pointed out that Arab reconciliation is a top priority for common Arab action because its results will have a direct impact on the present and future of the Arab nation. He stressed that Arab reconciliation cannot be achieved unless the causes of the August 1990 events [Iraq's invasion of Kuwait] are addressed. He said a solution to the problems of the [Kuwaiti] prisoners and reparation is the basis of any initiative to clear the Arab air. He said the Arab League has the ambition of establishing Arab peacekeeping forces as a transitional stage until a comprehensive concept of pan-Arab security is defined.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Commends Alexandria Summit Communique

JN3112163394 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1515 GMT 31 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat today commended the Alexandria summit communique. Palestine was not absent at the summit of Presidents Mubarak and al-Asad and the Saudi Monarch King Fahd-Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, 'Arafat said in a statement to the Jericho-based AL-AQSA newspaper to be published tomorrow.

The Alexandria summit communique, noted 'Arafat, specifically referred to occupied Jerusalem, demanded the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied Arab territories, and emphasized the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

'Arafat Eulogizes Those 'Killed by Israeli Bullets'

JN0301163895 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1515 GMT 3 Jan 95

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

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[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat has pledged to the martyrs to continue the march while their blood illuminates the road to Jerusalem, the capital of the state of Palestine.

Delivering a speech in the battalion's mosque in Gaza following prayers for the three martyrs killed by Israeli bullets in border posts in the northern part of Gaza Strip last night, the president said: We neither lament nor cry over martyrs, but we ululate to them. We all are martyrdom projects.

The president pointed out that our weapons of faith and will are stronger than any weapons that may terrorize our Palestinian people. He stressed that the Palestinian people cannot be frightened by blood. He added: We are the people of steadfastness who have responsibilities. He then exclaimed: God is great. Thousands of citizens who came from all over the strip to take part in the funeral repeated the exclamation after him. [passage omitted]

Justice Minister Furayh Abu-Middayn, Brigadier General Amin al- Hindi, and Public Prosecutor Khalid al-Qidrah, and other figures and military commanders were present at the cemetery. A 21-gun salute was fired during the burial ceremony.

'Arafat Confirms Visit to Jordan

TA0301164695 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 1 Jan 95 pp 1, 23

[Report by Jawdat Mana']

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Gaza—President Yasir 'Arafat has confirmed his coming visit to Amman to meet with Jordan's King Husayn Bin-Talal.

In an exclusive interview with AL-QUDS on the eve of the 30th anniversary of the founding of Fatah, President 'Arafat added: I will proceed with this visit within the next few days.

The president hoped that an agreement can be reached with the Israelis within the next few weeks on the issue of Palestinian elections.

He said: We have conveyed our firm position to the Israelis concerning the elections, which necessitates the Israeli army's redeployment in the West Bank as stipulated by the Declaration of Principles.

It has been learned from a Palestinian source that no agreement has been reached yet between the Palestinian and Israeli sides about the participation of Jerusalem's Palestinian residents in the elections, but that an agreement on this issue is to be reached within one month.

President 'Arafat considered the Israeli settlement onslaught in the occupied West Bank a danger that subjects the peace process to retreat. He said: This onslaught coincides with our imminent entry into these territories. He added: They know that we are coming. [passage omitted]

'Arafat on Negotiations, Hamas, Authority

NC0401084895 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 30 Dec 94 pp 20-21, 74

[Interview with PA Chairman Yasir 'Arafat by Salwa Abu-Sa'dah in Gaza; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Abu-Sa'dah] President 'Arafat: What happened between you and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres in Gaza a few days ago?

['Arafat] The most important issue we discussed was the accurate implementation of the agreement we signed in Washington and Cairo. In a press conference, Peres announced that the Israelis are committed to this agreement and that they will cooperate with the Palestinian Authority [PA] to implement it, especially concerning elections, redeployment of forces, and the transfer of the remaining powers to the PA.

[Abu-Sa'dah] But the Israeli delegation did not respond to the paper presented by the Palestinians on the redeployment. How do you explain this Israeli sluggishness?

['Arafat] The Israeli cabinet held an intensive debate over this particular issue, and it was finally agreed that we would continue working together to implement what we have agreed upon.

Peres told THE JERUSALEM POST that he will not violate his agreement with the Palestinians and that the Israelis will withdraw, but that the security needs will be taken into consideration. What does he mean by that?

[Abu-Sa'dah] Peres believes security matters in the West Bank are more complicated than in Gaza.

['Arafat] No, I do not agree with him. It is true that the number of settlements in the West Bank is larger than in Gaza, but considering the area of both regions, the problems are virtually the same.

[Abu-Sa'dah] Is the security problem involving 120,000 settlers in the West Bank the same as that involving 4,000 settlers in Gaza?

['Arafat] Do not forget that the 4,000 settlers live in an area of 360 square kilometers, while the 120,000 are spread out over an area of 6,000 square kilometers.

[Abu-Sa'dah] What will happen to the side roads, bridges, and other security matters? Will there be new Israeli conditions?

['Arafat] No, there will be no new Israeli conditions. We agreed that we should learn from our experience in Gaza and implement it fully in the West Bank, making the necessary amendments.

[Abu-Sa'dah] But this is different from what Rabin said in South Korea. He said the Palestinians should not imagine that there can be a solution without some parts of Palestine being seized [by Israel].

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['Arafat] My latest meeting with Peres and the Israeli delegation and my contacts with Rabin helped us transcend these things. There will be other meetings and we will undoubtedly discuss these issues.

[Abu-Sa'dah] What are your most important demands from the Israelis?

['Arafat] I do not negotiate through newspapers, but the general framework of our upcoming meetings and negotiations will be the implementation of the second phase of the agreement.

[Abu-Sa'dah] The Israelis have recently proposed that they pull back in two phases: A withdrawal for three days during which elections would be held and a second phase in which final locations for the deployment of the Israeli forces would be specified. What do you think of this?

['Arafat] We have gone beyond these matters and ideas.

[Abu-Sa'dah] What about the issues that are still not resolved in the Cairo agreement, such as the size of Jericho, the safe corridor, and the crossing points?

['Arafat] All these issues will be subjects for negotiations when the two sides return to the negotiating table in Cairo.

[Abu-Sa'dah] Will the PA endure without holding elections until withdrawal is completed?

['Arafat] We insist on redeployment before the elections.

[Abu-Sa'dah] Some writings, including a recent article of mine, fear that the Israeli procrastination is designed to limit the process to autonomy. What does Abu-'Ammar say?

['Arafat] We have a certain goal that is backed at the Arab, Islamic, and international levels. This agreement was signed at the conference, then approved by the Palestine Central Council and the Israeli parliament. Copies of the agreement have been filed at the United Nations.

[Abu-Sa'dah] What do you say to Abba Eban's proposal to integrate the transitional and final stages [of negotiations] to avoid ramifications? The same thing is suggested by Yosi Belin.

['Arafat] I believe that the most important thing right now is to comply with what has been agreed. Proposals are numerous, both within and outside negotiations. Eventually, all matters will be agreed upon between us and the other party.

[Abu-Sa'dah] Why then was it reported that the PA has agreed on withdrawal from Janin?

['Arafat] These were mere examples to show how easy it was to implement the agreement. This was just a hypothetical matter that popped up during the talks about possible problems in Janin.

[Abu-Sa'dah] The West Bank settlers thought of assembling all the settlements in four or five big centers. Is that acceptable to the Palestinians?

['Arafat] I do not think that this has been officially proposed.

[Abu-Sa'dah] Have you sent the conference sponsors messages rejecting the present Israeli procrastination?

['Arafat] Yes. I have held contacts with the conference sponsors, as well as with Egypt, Norway, and the European Union, in the past two weeks. I also have notified the United Nations, the Islamic summit in Rabat, and the Arab League. Our contacts are continuing.

[Abu-Sa'dah] What about Israel's continued settlement activity in Jerusalem and the West Bank?

['Arafat] This is a clear violation of the agreements we signed. It is unacceptable to make any geographic or demographic change in the West Bank and Gaza. Therefore, any expansion is a violation. We have decided to follow up on the matter at the highest levels with the parties concerned.

[Abu-Sa'dah] How do you view Ezer Weizmann's proposal concerning Jerusalem?

['Arafat] This is only Weizmann's proposal. Don't forget that Resolution 242, upon which the peace process has relied since we went to Madrid, stipulates withdrawal from all the Palestinian and Arab territories that were occupied in 1967, including Jerusalem. Jerusalem is part of the occupied territories.

[Abu-Sa'dah] What about the Palestinian goal and what do you say about solutions?

['Arafat] I am presenting my viewpoint on the issue. Weizmann is also entitled to his own views. As far as we are concerned, Jerusalem is the capiptal of the state of Palestine. It has been, still is, and will continue to be the capital of our state. Everybody should realize that during our talks, there was an Israeli pledge to protect the Islamic and Christian holy places and the Palestinian establishments in Jerusalem. We recognize the Jewish sanctities in the city. I believe that throughout history the Jews have never complained of any assault on their holy sites, not in Jerusalem and Palestine alone but also in the Arab and Muslim worlds.

[Abu-Sa'dah] We have heard statements on the continuation of settlements and dismantling them in an effort to find a permanent solution. There is also the issue of growing birth rates in the Palestinian areas compared to the Israeli areas. What is your comment?

['Arafat] There are many visions that will be presented. Everything will be discussed at the negotiating table. Just like the issues of Jerusalem, the refugees, and the borders, the settlements will be discussed at the soonest possible time and within a period not exceeding the third year.

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[Abu-Sa'dah] What about the 1967 refugees?

['Arafat] There are the 1948 refugees and the 1967 refugees. The 1967 refugees were forced out. An Egyptian-Palestinian-Jordanian-Israeli committee was formed to discuss their situation.

[Abu-Sa'dah] Is it true that Dr. Nabil Sha'th proposed to Israeli Foreign Minister Peres the establishment of a special department in the Israeli Foreign Ministry to take care of Palestinian affairs?

['Arafat] This is newspaper talk.

[Abu-Sa'dah] Did the PA agree to a joint Palestinian-Israeli authority in certain centers in the West Bank?

['Arafat] No, this did not happen. Regrettably, newspapers mix things up. We have joint patrols in certain areas in the West Bank and Gaza to secure traffic on roads. The role of these patrols is limited during the transitional period.

[Abu-Sa'dah] What about the elections? Have the two parties agreed on the powers of the council and the number of its members, and who has the right to vote?

['Arafat] These are general, free democratic elections. Every Palestinian has a right to take part in the elections. As for other issues, the two sides agreed on most of them. One point relating to the number of council members has not been resolved. Rabin and I will agree on this point at our next meeting.

[Abu-Sa'dah] What about Hamas' stance on the elections?

['Arafat] Hamas has declared more than once that it will participate in the elections.

[Abu-Sa'dah] Hamas declared that it will participate in the vocational and Chamber of Commerce elections but not in the general elections?

['Arafat] No. It said it would participate in the general elections.

[Abu-Sa'dah] Do you prefer that all groups and trends participate in the elections?

['Arafat] I do not prefer this because it is the right of every group to take part in the elections.

[Abu-Sa'dah] What are your expectations regarding the results of the elections?

['Arafat] This is up to the masses to decide. I am against predicting the results because they are free and democratic elections.

[Abu-Sa'dah] It is being reported that Hamas' popularity is on the increase even after the arrival of the PA because it meets the demands of many people, as it provides work, medical treatment and other vital needs. What do you say?

['Arafat] Hamas does not provide medicine or treatment or work. Hamas receives funds and it spends them on some of its projects. We are in charge of hospitals, schools, and the families of martyrs and handicapped. Hamas receives a great deal of funds and has no responsibilities or obligations. It can spend on chambers in the elections as happened in the Chamber of Commerce elections in the Gaza Strip. Hamas spent $18 million. This happened before the PA was proclaimed, whereas Fatah, which I represent, spent only on certain essential needs an amount not exceeding several thousand dinars. The result was 15 to 16 in favor of Fatah. Funds do not influence our people's conviction.

[Abu-Sa'dah] How did you handle the issue of arms with various Palestinian groups in Gaza?

['Arafat] Regrettably, I call what is going on chaos. Go to the West Bank and you will see that the Israelis allow free arms markets in broad daylight. They allowed this in Gaza before they withdrew. During this period of chaos, 26,000 pieces of arms were sold before the Israelis left. Ordinary individuals bought arms. Buying arms was not confined to organizations. We are now working out a plan to put things under control.

[Abu-Sa'dah] What is your plan to achieve this project?

['Arafat] It is not going to be easy, but we have begun implementing it.

[Abu Sa'dah] May I ask about the means and methods that you will use to implement this plan?

['Arafat] We still attach special importance to this issue and are dealing with it soberly, quietly, and with cool nerves.

[Abu-Sa'dah] That is nice, but we want to hear about certain measures that the PA will take to implement its plan.

['Arafat] Is it reasonable to declare our methods in collecting arms? However, I can say that we have seized most of the significant arms merchants, who are Palestinians.

[Abu-Sa'dah] How many have been arrested so far?

['Arafat] More than 70.

[Abu-Sa'dah] What about the remaining measures?

['Arafat] We have closed all the roads used for smuggling. These roads are well known and lead everywhere. We then banned the carrying of arms in the streets, except for those who are licensed.

[Abu-Sa'dah] On the occasion of mentioning the great deal of funds that Hamas receives, what about the promised aid? Have you received any funds?

['Arafat] Regrettably, these promises remain promises. Even after admitting default in Brussels, up to this

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moment, we have not received any funds, neither from the international community nor from the Arabs.

[Abu-Sa'dah] What are you doing to confront this problem?

['Arafat] We are relying on our people, despite our meager resources.

[Abu-Sa'dah] We used to hear about millions of Palestinians. What did they offer after the PA took over in Gaza?

['Arafat] We are still waiting. Only few people offered to help.

[Abu-Sa'dah] What are the areas of their activity in Gaza?

['Arafat] All areas, but the number is few. Some of them are interested in housing and industry. I refer them to the competent authorities.

[Abu-Sa'dah] What is the size of Palestinian investment so far?

['Arafat] Up to now three Palestinian holding companies have been set up. The size of investment of the first company totals $200 million, the second $100 million, and the third to $100 million. This is in addition to individuals who began investing on their own and 11 bank branches.

[Abu-Sa'dah] What have you done regarding the Palestinian currency and the Central Bank?

['Arafat] We are demanding them. We have established the Palestinian monetary authority. This is the beginning or the first brick to building a Central Bank.

[Abu-Sa'dah] Regarding inter-Palestinian differences, including those with Hamas, is it true that all channels of dialogue have been closed, as Hamas says?

['Arafat] Hamas is not one trend. The other day a dialogue took place between certain Hamas leaders and our brothers in Fatah. Dialogue will not stop with Hamas, al-Jihad, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, or the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Dialogue is open and continuing in numerous ways.

[Abu-Sa'dah] Many people are currently wondering about increasing differences within Fatah ranks, that you are alone facing the storm, and that the PLO Central Committee is not holding any meetings. What is your response?

['Arafat] Let us first define Fatah.

[Abu-Sa'dah] I am not talking about the popular base, but the Central Committee and its members.

['Arafat] Fatah is the movement of the Palestinian people. There are absolutely no differences inside the Central Committee. But we have freedom of expression and our movement is too democratic.

[Abu-Sa'dah] We hear about democracy but we hear about resignations and divisions.

['Arafat] It was reported that Ahmad Quray resigned, but this is not true. There are many examples. If you take Faruq Qaddumi as an example, he is the foreign minister of the state of Palestine, member of the Executive Committee, and director of the Political Department. Although he is opposed to the Oslo agreement, he officially complies with this agreement and has declared this more than once.

[Abu-Sa'dah] Abu-al-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi] believes that you put yourself into a deadlock and a difficult situation when you agreed to bring the PA to Gaza before the Israeli withdrawal. What do you say about this?

['Arafat] I am not in a deadlock. Don't forget that I put myself into a deadlock before when I secretly entered Gaza twice in 1965 and again in 1967 and 1968. How could one lead his people if he is not in the inferno? "Go thou, and thy Lord, and fight ye two, while we sit here and watch." [Koranic verse]

Don't forget that I was with the Islamic mediation committee in Jedda when Beirut was besieged. I entered Beirut despite the siege. I was in Beirut when the war and air strikes started. I was in Cairo when Beirut was besieged by my Syrian brothers in 1976. But I managed to enter Beirut secretly and join my besieged comrades. I did the same thing in 1982. The same thing happened when Tripoli was besieged. In other words, I was involved in every deadlock that the Palestinian people passed through.

[Abu-Sa'dah] But what about your deadlock and the voluminous problems that you are facing in Gaza now?

['Arafat] This is the most honorable deadlock because I am with my people in our homeland.

[Abu-Sa'dah] Is it true that the Fatah organization inside the territories is being dismantled and that a number of political personalities will take their place, which causes concern among the Fatah members?

['Arafat] Fatah is a number that cannot be divided or subtracted. It only accepts addition.

[Abu-Sa'dah] How?

['Arafat] Fatah is strong and united. The outcome of the elections, which were held in universities, schools, and trade unions, including al-Azhat University, show that Fatah attained a sweeping victory. The female students obtained 81 percent and the male students got 75 percent. We left the door wide open for all groups and organizations to join us. But the Islamic university is not allowing other organizations to join it.

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[Abu-Sa'dah] How does Abu-'Ammar discern Fatah's role in supporting the PA in future?

['Arafat] Fatah is the movement of the Palestinian people. It will remain the Palestinian people's leading and pioneering movement.

[Abu-Sa'dah] Some opponents of the Oslo accord say that what has been achieved is not a peace process. They blame the PA for conceding national rights, particularly those pertaining to self- determination, establishment of the state, the issue of refugees, Palestinians in diaspora, and security requirements. What is your comment?

['Arafat] I regret to say that these are all lies because we will solve the problems of the evacuees and refugees in the beginning of the third year. We will have full national rights with the start of the third year. We will sign an agreement with the Israeli side concerning the final status, including setting up the state with Jerusalem as its capital. The most important victory that we scored and the most important historic strategic action that we accomplished is that we managed to protect our people so that they would remain the difficult figure on the Middle East map, both geographically and politically. This is true despite the fact that many states collapse and others emerge after each war, particularly after the third world war: the end of the Cold War.

[Abu-Sa'dah] Some fear that the interest in providing security to the Israeli settlements will change the PA from a national institution confronting the Israeli practices into a partner. What is your comment?

['Arafat] These people do not read history. They represent the superficial intellectuals, the society intellectuals. They do not read that Saladin pledged to protect the crusaders and their convoys during the pilgrimage. During the al-Hudaybiyyah peace, Prophet Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him salvation, turned away Muslims because the treaty did not stipulate it. [sentence as published]

Let these intellectuals return to the facts of history. We make our dreams facts, but they are succumbing to their realities.

[Abu-Sa'dah] Can you elaborate, because there are persistent reports that you make decisions dictatorially?

['Arafat] Why would there be such reports when discussions are always held before decisions are made? Numerous decisions were made while I was opposed to them by the Fatah Central Committee and the Central Council of the Executive Committee. These days some decisions are made by the Council of Ministers, although I am opposed to them. I proceed from the adage of Caliph 'Umar Bin-al- Khattab, who said may God's mercy be upon anyone who rectifies 'Umar's deviation.

[Abu-Sa'dah] What are the reforms, structures, and institutions that the PA has established in Gaza to perpetuate national authority?

['Arafat] I object to the word perpetuation. We are working to build a homeland and the state institutions and we have done a great deal in this respect.

We took over a homeland whose entire infrastructure was completely destroyed by the occupation. They even removed railway bars. We are suffering problems with water, sewage, electricity, and telephones. They have not added one single bed to what the Egyptians left for us in Gaza hospitals. Besides, we have no airport or port, but our plan aims to address all these issues.

[Abu-Sa'dah] It is rumored that you refused to allow Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] to share the Nobel Prize with you.

['Arafat] I demanded that Mahmud 'Abbas share the prize with me.

[Abu-Sa'dah] What is Abu-'Ammar's comment on Edward Said's book "Gaza-Jericho, American Peace"

['Arafat] It is too trivial to merit my response.

[Abu-Sa'dah] They say that in 1982 the PLO stopped being a liberation movement and that it turned into a political party because it became willing to accept a self-rule instead of a national authority. What is your comment?

['Arafat] Who launched the intifadah in Gaza? The intifadah was not made in the United States.

[Abu-Sa'dah] Mr. President, we were talking about the author Edward Said.

['Arafat] Of course I read the book, just to pass the time. There are others besides Said who pretend to be nationalistic. It is the PLO that launched the intifadah through its people and children—2,000 martyrs, 117,000 wounded, 138,000 detainees, 7,000 handicapped, and 8,000 cases of abortion. Said, who is in the United States, does not feel his people's torment. He does not realize the magnitude of the greatest uprising in the modern age, which complements the Palestinian revolution.

Al-Husayni on al-Khidr Events, Settlement

NC3112102094 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 31 Dec 94

[Telephone interview with Faysal al-Husayni, member of the Palestinian Authority responsible for the Jerusalem file, in Jerusalem, by Ramadan Husayn in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Husayn] Mr. Faysal, we welcome you to the Voice of the Arabs and good morning.

[Al-Husayni] Good morning to you.

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[Husayn] Could you fill us in on the nature of the confrontations that have been taking place now in various parts of the occupied West Bank?

[Al-Husayni] For some time now, Israel has been adamant about continuing its settlement extensions in all parts of the West Bank, particularly in the area around Jerusalem. We would not be revealing any secrets if we said that the Palestinian negotiators have presented this matter for discussion many times without reaching any result with the Israeli side. Therefore, the Palestinian negotiator has now started going down to the street, as happened in the village of al-Khidr, to transfer this image from the table of negotiations to the land. Of course, this took place upon the initiative of the residents of al-Khidr, but it is an example of what confrontations could be like throughout the West Bank to stop this settlement growth, which we can clearly claim is material evidence of the fact that Israel is not serious about peace and that it insists on destroying the peace process.

[Husayn] Mr. Faysal, have you held contacts with officials in the Israeli Government regarding the clashes and the deteriorating conditions in the West Bank?

[Al-Husayni] Contacts regarding the settlement issue with the Israelis have taken place previously. They confirmed they will not expand their settlements. However, every time after they make such a statement or promise, they carry out some practical steps that contradict all their promises and theoretical stands.

[Husayn] On the other hand, have you held contacts with other circles outside the occupied territories to discuss this issue?

[Al-Husayni] Yes, there are contacts with Arab and international sides. We really hope that the statements that have emerged from Cairo, as well as the Jerusalem Committee meetings in Morocco and the summit meeting in Alexandria attended by Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, His Majesty King Fahd, and President Mubarak, will be working toward making Israel face the real position, that it cannot get peace and build settlements at the same time. Either settlements, or peace.

[Husayn] Mr. Faysal, what do you say about the U.S. reaction to this situation?

[Al-Husayni] So far, we have not seen a U.S. reaction to the situation of the required level. We believe this American stand is a cause for concern because day by day this stand proves that it supports the Israeli policy, no matter what this policy is and no matter to what extent it is hostile to, or opposes the peace process. Regrettably, the U.S. stand continues to be less than the required minimum such a role should be in the region.

[Husayn] Mr. Faysal, do you intend to convene the international Security Council to discuss this issue?

[Al-Husayni] I think there are some calls of this kind and attempts to convene the Council. However, I expect that if Israel does not take the necessary steps, this battle or confrontation will be transferred from the Security Council, the table of negotiations, and the diplomatic channels, to Palestinian territory and on the basic level. We can then claim that Israel succeeded in blocking the peace road and option and in opening another option, which is that of confrontation and violence. If this happens, the Israeli authorities and their awkward policies will be fully responsible.

[Husayn] Mr. Faysal, the Israeli Cabinet is expected to hold a meeting tomorrow, Sunday. Rabin said that he will present the issue of settlements for a vote during the Cabinet meeting. Do you expect the Israeli Cabinet to make a final decision on this issue tomorrow, Sunday?

[Al-Husayni] When we signed the agreement, we did so with the State of Israel, not with ministers, the parliament, or the Supreme Court. Therefore, Israel, as a state, has to adhere to the agreement and stop settlements. These excuses they come up with—that they need to put the issue up for a vote before the Council of Ministers or that they need a decision from the Supreme Court—are all games that will not fool us. The responsibility and positions are very clear to them. Either they want peace, or they do not want peace. This is what will become clear to us on Wednesday. If the Israeli Government once again tries to tamper with the agreement and change it from what it is—a very clear political matter—and if it does not adhere to the agreement, then I believe this will be the last sign for us to abandon the peace process. This will force the Palestinian people to opt for the other choice.

So far, the Palestinian people see two options before them: The peace option represented by the PLO and the Palestinian Authority, and the violence option represented by the Palestinian forces opposing the peace agreement. The Palestinian people are looking to and aspiring to the peace option. However, if Israel closes off this option and chooses the other one, then the Palestinian people will only have one option left, that of violence.

[Husayn] Mr. Faysal, why doesn't a meeting take place between President 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Rabin to discuss this issue?

[Al-Husayni] There is no use for such a meeting. Things are clear to Mr. Rabin. Things are clear regarding the agreement. A meeting of this kind with Rabin should bring with it a decision on a new policy; it should not take place in order to issue a decision.

[Husayn] Mr. Faysal, do you believe that the Higher Palestinian-Israeli Liaison Committee meeting on Tuesday in Cairo will manage to discuss this issue in a way that will find solutions for it?

[Al-Husayni] If the Cabinet decision supports the expansion of settlements, then I doubt there will be any role or benefit from the Cairo meeting.

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[Husayn] Could we give the Arab listener an idea about the nature of the Israeli settlement policies and its attempts at changing the demography of Jerusalem and judaicizing the city.

[Al-Husayni] If we are talking about Jerusalem as an example—Jerusalem, which in 1967 was 6 sq kms—Israel has expanded it at the expense of the lands around it to become 72 kms square. The Palestinians are allowed to build on 14 percent of this area. Israel has been allocated an area amounting to 34 percent. Private Palestinian territory, the area of which amounts to 52 percent and which belongs to the Palestinians is considered by Israel arable land on which building is prohibited.

Therefore, an area of 34 percent of the size of Jerusalem has been given to the settlers. 14 percent has been given to the Palestinians, but has been used up and there isn't a single inch left to build on. 52 percent of our land is considered by Israel as reserve land to build new settlements on.

[Husayn] Dear brothers, to conclude this dialogue we thank Mr. Faysal al-Husayni, member of the Palestinian Authority responsible for the Jerusalem file and ranking Palestinian negotiator. Thank you Mr. Faysal, and welcome to the Voice of the Arabs.

[Al-Husayni] Thank you, and good morning to you.

Al-Husayni: 'No Peace' if Activity Continues

JN0301172595 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1515 GMT 3 Jan 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Palestinian negotiating team, has said the continuation of settlement activity could bury the peace process. Al-Husayni added the following:

[Begin recording] [al-Husayni] The Israelis are trying to make things appear as if the dispute is over sites. But, the issue is one of principle. There can be no peace if settlement activity continues. I am standing here in Sikaka [village] and see bulldozers shovelling land. But, really, they are not shovelling land but instead opening the grave of the peace process that is being buried here, at this moment.

[Unidentified correspondent] What is your position in the National Authority? Will talks resume while settlement activity is continuing?

[Al-Husayni] In fact, there is a meeting today. This issue must and will be discussed. What is going on now is the burial of the agreement and the peace process. This should either be admitted or the course should be reversed. The Israelis must realize that we, as well as they, have two options. First, the option of peace and stopping settlement activity. The second option is violence. If they block the road of talks, we will have no option but violence. If they choose violence, we cannot but choose violence.

[Correspondent] So, can the intifidah begin again, Faysal al-Husayni?

[Al-Husayni] If Israel continues to implement these measures, no force or human being on this globe can prevent the intifadah from exploding once again.

[Correspondent] How do you evaluate the incident that took place in Gaza yesterday, in which three people were martyred?

[Al-Husayni] Once again, this is further evidence of the Israeli mentality that cannot change, that respects no agreements, no borders, or the value of human life.

[Correspondent] Thank you, Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Palestinian negotiating team.

[Al-Husayni] You are welcome. [end recording]

Al-Agha Hopes for Understanding With Israel

TA0301165995 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 3 Jan 95 p A3

[Report by correspondent 'Amira Hess in the Gaza Strip]

[FBIS Translated Text] "Is continued settlement of the West Bank and East Jerusalem the prize Israel is giving us Palestinians for the flexibility we evinced in the Oslo agreement?," Dr. Zakariya al-Agha, the Palestinian Authority's [PA] housing minister, bitterly asked yesterday.

"In Oslo we agreed to put aside the question of the settlements, on condition that they freeze construction. We agreed to put off negotiations on this issue until the time of the debate on the permanent solution. The Declaration of Principles [DOP] notes that nothing will be done to change the status quo," al-Agha added.

In an interview with HA'ARETZ, al-Agha said that "the problem is not only in al-Khidr, but also in the West Bank and in East Jerusalem. The continued Israeli building there contravenes the understandings we reached."

[Hess] But the settlers claim that the land legally belongs to them.

[Al-Agha] This is Palestinian land, and it should be discussed in the framework of the negotiations on the permanent solution. Even if they bought the land, construction there contradicts the DOP because it changes the status quo. In Oslo the Israelis told us that they would not encourage settlements, most of which are political. They said the settlements were a legacy from the Likud government. If Israeli construction continues in the West Bank and in East Jerusalem, what will we discuss in the negotiations on the permanent solution? On the one hand the Israelis allow construction to continue on Palestinian land, and on the other they prevent residents of Khan Yunus from building houses.

[Hess] What can the PA do to prevent this construction?

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[Al-Agha] Resolute discussions must be held with the Israelis. If they do not respond positively, we will approach the countries supporting the process, and even the UN Security Council.

[Hess] Are you contemplating the suspension of the negotiations?

[Al-Agha] The talks must not be frozen, but we will make every possible effort to stop the settlement drive. We are patient, but we cannot abide the expropriation of Palestinian land from under our very noses.

[Hess] If so, perhaps the opponents of the Oslo agreement, such as the opposition within the PLO, were right when they argued that putting off the debate about the settlements jeopardizes the fulfillment of the Palestinian goal of independence in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

[Al-Agha] True, the issue of the settlements was given first priority in the Washington talks. These negotiations got stuck because we failed to strike the issue off the agenda. In Oslo the negotiators tried to circumvent the difficulties. We evinced flexibility in Oslo when we agreed to put off the debate about the settlements. Is this the prize we are getting for our flexibility?

[Hess] The fact is that what you term settlement—Israeli construction in East Jerusalem—continues despite your objections.

[Al-Agha] We hope to come to an understanding with the Israelis, and if not, we will reconsider our moves. We support the people. We cannot remain neutral in the face of its struggle.

Security Commander Blames Gaza Incident on Israelis

JN0301173695 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1515 GMT 3 Jan 95

[Statement by Colonel Muhammad Dahlan, head of the Preventive Security Services in Gaza Strip; date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is not the first Israeli aggression. Israel has violated the agreement and is taking provocative measures every day. Yesterday's incident topped Israel's provocative actions against the Palestinian police forces. The incident began at exactly 2240 yesterday, when the Israelis claimed that fire was opened by Palestinian forces or Palestinian positions near the green line in Eretz. Their heavily armed soldiers attacked the first Palestinian position, illuminated and stormed the area, and asked the Palestinian soldiers to hand over their weapons. Then a quarrel followed, and the Israeli soldiers fired at the Palestinian soldiers, immediately martyring three and wounding several others. The personnel at the [Palestinian] checkpoint then fired shots in the air to warn the Israeli soldiers. I am sure that the incident was planned, especially since the Israeli soldiers held an exercise in the area three days ago. The Israelis always claim that Palestinians fire shots in the air and at Israeli soldiers. But no report has ever said that the Palestinian soldiers fired at the Israeli patrols. I believe this is a serious incident. In fact, the Palestinian police will not sit back with folded arms while their sons are being attacked in their positions. Even if the Israelis claim we opened fire on their patrols, this should not lead to the occupation of territories.

We view the incident as a serious precedent because they entered the territories of the Palestinian Authority and tried to occupy positions that belong to the Palestinian police in accordance with an agreement with the Israelis.

I believe there was a premeditated intention, especially since they have tried to approach the Palestinian positions over the past three days. They also make false allegations to justify yesterday's incident. The operation lasted for 10 minutes. There were many Israeli soldiers in the area, and they also summoned reinforcements after the clash began. I do not know the exact number of these soldiers.

At the beginning of the incident, the Israelis also moved a force to the Nahal 'Oz area, and another Israeli Army force stood ready in the area. We monitored the situation, and our brothers in the national security forces were closely following events.

PLO To Seek Arab Recognition of Passports

NC0101190695 Paris AFP in English 1719 GMT 1 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Gaza City, Gaza Strip, Jan 1 (AFP)—The Palestinian self-rule authority said Sunday [1 January] it would ask Arab states to recognize the passport it plans to hand out to residents of autonomous Gaza and Jericho.

The request would be made at a meeting of Arab League interior ministers to take place in Tunis.

The passport, printed in Germany in Arabic and English, is dark green with an eagle and the word "Palestine" on the cover. Only "passport" is mentioned in Arabic, while in English both "passport" and "travel document" are used.

Israel insisted it be referred to as a travel document to ensure it is not used as a symbol of statehood.

It will be the first time since the end of the British mandate of Palestine in May 1948 that the Palestinians have had their own passport.

Since the Israeli seizure of the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, the Palestinians could travel abroad with a laissez-passer issued by the Israeli military, a Jordanian passport or an Egyptian travel document.

Before the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, Jordan controlled the West Bank and Egypt the Gaza Strip.

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PA Refuses To Hand Over 2 Murder Suspects

TA0101170395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 1 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian Authority [PA] is refusing to hand over two men wanted for the murder of an Israeli civilian in the Gaza Strip. The two are suspected of having killed Uri Megidish at Gush Qatif. The Palestinian legal authorities argue that the crime was committed before the Cairo agreement was signed. They are therefore not eligible for transfer according to the Palestinians. The two suspects are currently serving as officers in the Palestinian Police force.

Al-Rujub Hospitalized in Jerusalem Without Permit

TA0401061495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem has learned that Jibril al-Rujub, head of the Palestinian security services in the West Bank, has been hospitalized in Jerusalem. Al-Rujub is staying in Jerusalem without a permit. Our police affairs correspondent points out that, in the past, top officers of the Israel Police announced that if al-Rujub comes to Jerusalem, he will be questioned about the kidnapping of a Jordanian citizen in the city.

Al-Rujub visited Hebron last night, in the wake of a fistfight between his men and several members of the local al-Ja'bari family. Four of al-Rujub's men were wounded in the melee.

Labor Government Seen Pursuing Likud Settlement Policy

TA0301173695 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM TIMES in English 30 Dec 94 p 4

[Editorial: "Spark at al-Khidr]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The issue of al-Khidr is one episode in a series of continued Jewish settlement building in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem.

By declaring that the lands in al-Khidr are state property, thereby legalizing its confiscation for settlement expansion purposes, Israel has proved that it is delaying the implementation of the second phase of the Oslo Agreement. And in its race against time, it is hurrying to confiscate more land around Jerusalem and build new settlements.

The current Israeli Labor government is merely continuing Likud policy with its decision to expand the Efrat settlement at the expense of the Palestinians. This is threatening to destroy the peaceful settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

According to the agreement of the Declaration of Principles, no change in the status of settlers or settlements will take place for at least three years, following its signing in September 1993. The issue of the settlements is one of the topics that has been left for discussion during the final status negotiations.

Israel then has to chose between peace and settlements, because it is impossible to continue negotiations while settlement operations increase on the ground. The settlements are a mine that can explode at any time.

A spark has ignited in al-Khidr village near Bethlehem, which can spread throughout the occupied territories to the sites of the intensive campaigns mounted by Jewish settlers from the north to the south.

To make the situation worse, the Israeli army is supporting the settlers. Two days ago they attacked old people, women and children, Palestinians and Israelis, who were attempting to protect the villagers' lands. One must ask how the Israeli government can talk about peace while sending soldiers to protect the settlers who oppose the peace process?

The Palestinian National Authority has confirmed that this is a very dangerous stage. What kind of peace is being proffered to the Palestinian people while their lands are being taken away from them? After all land is peace, and there is no peace without land.

The Israeli government must understand that they must end all attempts to confiscate land for building or expanding settlements in the occupied territories. Rather, it has to start implementing the Oslo Agreement by redeploying its military out of the Palestinian populated areas to pave the way for legislative elections.

Any delay in implementation of the peace accords will surely destroy Israel's credibility and maybe even the peace process.

Malluh: PFLP Headquarters To Stay in Damascus

JN0301125495 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 3 Jan 95 pp 32, 24

[Report by Tawfiq 'Abid]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] 'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh, member of the Political Bureau of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], has said that the PFLP headquarters will remain in Damascus and will not be moved to the Iraqi capital despite the political differences that have existed between it and the Syrian leadership since the Madrid conference.

In an exclusive statement to AL-DUSTUR following his return, as a member of PFLP delegation, from Baghdad, he added: We did not receive any requests from the Syrian brothers to vacate our headquarters. We were not exposed to any pressure or harassment, or prevented from carrying out any political activity in Damascus.

He said: After holding several political meetings, our relations with fraternal Syria have been warmer than in

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the past. We believe that the way the Syrian leadership deals with the negotiations with the Israelis in light of the current circumstances constitutes a sound stand in defense of the Syrian and Arab rights. [passage omitted]

Intifidah To 'Restart' If Settlement Continues

JN0301184095 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1515 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Ahamd al-Tibi, adviser to His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat, has said the National Authority will not allow the implementation of Israeli plans aimed at seizing Palestinian lands. He said Israel should make a choice between settlements and peace. He added the following:

[Begin Recording] [al-Tibi] We are present in every site where the sacred Palestinian land is threatened and where there are plans to seize and usurp land. On the popular and political levels, we will not allow the continuation of this campaign. Either the peace process or settlement activity should be chosen. We are in Sikaka [village] today out of solidarity with it. We will be present in Husan, al-Khidr, and in all the West Bank areas which are being threatened with usurpation. The Israeli Government should make a choice before the world and the Israeli and Palestinian public opinions between the settlement activity and the usurpation of lands or the peace process. What is happening today empties the peace process of its real contents.

[Correspondent] How do you evaluate the Israeli Government's decision about the al-Khidr lands?

[Al-Tibi] This is what I call deception because construction cannot be suspended on one hill only to be resumed on another hill, which they called the olives' hill. The continuation of work on the olives' hill could lead to dropping the branch of olive, which is the symbol of the peace process. Therefore, the Israeli decision allows for the continuation and intensification of settlement activity. Based on that, this decision is rejected in part and parcel. I regret that the Merez movement inside the [Israeli] Government did not ,ake a conclusive decision to withdraw from the government if general settlement activity was not stopped. Now, there is plan to build 1300 housing units in the settlement of Alfe Menashe and to confiscate Palestinian lands to build 750 housing units in the so-called Bet Ayre settlement. Settlement activity is continuing unabated. This means that they want to prejudice the final outcome of the final status talks. The Palestinian side can never accept this.

I came here upon the request of brother President Abu-'Ammar ['Arafat]. We should all be present in any place threatened with usurpation by the occupation and military authorities.

[Correspondent] Does this reflect a new Israeli policy to stop the peace process?

[Al-Tibi] This reflects great Palestinian efforts in all the occupied Palestinian lands to face up to settlement activity. I said earlier and now say to the Voice of Palestine that if the settlement activity continues, the intifadah could restart again vehemently, and in a manner different from that in the past. The Israeli Government should realize this. It should salvage the peace process by stopping the settlement activity and the usurpation of lands.

[Correspondent] Thanks to Dr. Ahamd al-Tibi, adviser to His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat.

[Al-Tibi] Thank you. [end recording]

Residents Clash With Settlers Over Morag Field

TA0301101095 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 3 Jan 95 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] (ITIM)— Apparently buoyed by the land dispute in Efrat, a number of Gaza residents arrived on tractors at a field belonging to Morag in the Qatif Bloc and began plowing the land, which they claim as their own.

When the Palestinians arrived, a Morag farmer was plowing a nearby field. The Gazans blocked his tractor.

A brawl then broke about between Morag residents and some 250 Palestinians who arrived at the scene. IDF [Israel Defense Forces] units, border policemen, and Palestinian policemen arrived and agreed to order Morag residents to stop working the land until the matter is investigated by the Israeli-Palestinian liaison committee.

"The Arabs have developed an appetite as a result of the government decision on the Efrat (expansion)," Tzvi Hendel, head of the Gaza Regional Coast, said yesterday.

"Efrat has set a precedent. If we give up here, there will be incidents like at Efrat all over the country," said Hendel.

Nahshon Halili, security officer at Morag, said he felt like another case of the disputed hill at Efrat was happening at Morag. He said neighboring Palestinians were always trying to take over lands from Morag, but this is the first time they tried to plow the land.

Clashes Said Result of 'Arafat Order To Escalate

TA0301123395 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 3 Jan 95 p 7

[Report by Roni Shaqed]

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Arafat has ordered his activists to escalate the struggle against the expansion of settlements and any other ground work.

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Action committees have been set up throughout the West Bank in cooperation with the Jerusalem-based Palestinian Land and Water Organization.

Following are the disputed sites over which a struggle has already been declared:

—Jerusalem's Har Homa neighborhood: Abutting Bayt Sahur, some of its land belongs to residents of this town and of neighboring villages. The first demonstration on the issue was held last week, with the participation of Peace Now members.

—Ramallah east bypass road: Ground work is under way to build a road from the settlement of Abir Ya'aqov toward Psagot. The work was halted in the wake of petitions submitted by local Arabs. A demonstration of landowners from al-Birah, Baytin, and 'Ayn Yabrud, whose land was expropriated in order to build the road, will be held tomorrow at the al-Birah Municipality.

—Expansion of Qiryat Sefer: Residents of the village of Dayr Qiddis, west of Ramallah, claim that their land has been expropriated. The first demonstration was held this week.

—The security fence being built around Ari'el will lead to a demonstration today by Iskaka and Salfit residents against the expropriation of land.

—Hebron bypass road: Local Arabs have already lodged their objections. This road will bypass the town of Halhul and Hebron's northern neighborhoods.

—Talmon: The expansion and paving of a road led to villagers from al-Janiyah filing petitions. Their objections are currently being debated. Heavy machinery was brought to the site, and demonstrations are expected there already this week.

—It will be impossible to execute the plan to build a system of bypass roads in the West Bank without expropriating land. The Central Command's legal adviser is looking into the possibility of issuing special expropriation orders that can stand the test of an appeal to the High Court of Justice in order to enable the execution of the plan within a reasonable period of time.

Arabs Cautioned Against Rush To Normalize

TA0301173595 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 29 Dec 94 p 13

[Editorial: "Normalization and Peace"]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to Arab and foreign media, the aim of the tripartite summit in Alexandria was to form an Arab bloc that can curb the rush by some Arab states to sign peace treaties or normalize relations with Israel, especially in the fields of economic cooperation and capital investment.

Following successive waves of normalization, the Arabs realize now that the phenomenon of reconciliation and the endeavor to normalize has presently become a natural phenomenon proving political maturity and an ability to adjust to the developments of the era and the requirements of the new world order.

Everyone is also observing through successive reports that the normalization current has turned into a sweeping tide from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf. This scrutiny, however should have been made the minute the symptoms of normalization began to appear or at least since normalization became a goal by itself, isolated from the fulfillment of the peace process and the Arab parties' attainment of their rights in accordance with UN resolutions.

Now that normalization, peace treaties, and peace have become realities, the brothers meeting in Egypt are duty bound to formulate an Arab framework that defines the concept of normalization and its strategic aims. It is essential for the Arab brothers throughout all the Arab states to realize that moving randomly and without restraint on the road of normalization will inflict the greatest damage to the rights of Arab parties that have not obtained their full rights yet. The Palestinian problem has still not been finally resolved in a way that realizes legitimate Palestinian aspirations. Syria is still endeavoring to regain the Golan Heights, and Lebanon is demanding the restoration of its border strip. Any effort toward normalization in the real sense, in the absence of the restoration of full Arab rights, will absolutely not be in the interest of the Arab nation and its just causes.

Radio Reports Interrogation of Israeli Soldiers

JN0401080595 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] National Authority sources have stated that the Palestinian police interrogated 10 Israeli soldiers in civilian clothes yesterday who were passing near Khan Yunus in the Gaza Strip.

The National Authority Public Security director said they were moved to the Liaison Committee office in Khan Yunus.

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Algeria

Zeroual Sets Up Election Commission

LD0301184295 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1700 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Head of State Liamine Zeroual has signed a directive on the setting up of a government commission charged with preparing presidential elections. The commission, which will be installed in the next two weeks, will be chaired by the prime minister and will be made up of the ministers of foreign affairs, interior, justice, finance, national education, communication, and posts and telecommunications, in addition to a representative from the presidency and another from the Defense Ministry.

The commission is expected to complete its work by the end of June at the latest.

French Media Criticized for 'Disinformation'

LD0301151295 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1130 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Over the last few days—since the Air France Airbus hijack to be precise—the western media, especially the French media, have launched a veritable media campaign against Algeria. Every single day their television news bulletins have had more reports and more comments on the hijack. Hassan Nafar reports:

[Nafar] Now is the time for questions because we are currently witnessing, as you put it, a veritable flood of disinformation coming from the French capital. According to commentaries written and broadcast there, you can just walk in anywhere in Algeria, that is, anybody can do anything without being disturbed.

It is out of the question for us to make revelations—which we don't have anyway. We are going to wait until the inquiries started both in Algiers and Paris are over, and until the results are made public. It seems to us, however, that instead of trying to criticize the Algerian state systematically by portraying its basic institutions as places where chaos, anarchy, and repression have been described as commonplace, French journalists would do better to set their own house in order. Have they got such a blinkered view of things that they don't see that in Corsica the FLNC [Corsican National Liberation Front] not only kills politicians but goes as far as holding news conferences at the very scene of attacks?

As for the three terrorists the whole of France is looking for, is it not an opportune moment to ask why France opened its doors to them legally—they had visas—before hunting them down?

Of course this focus on Algeria reveals several goals which Algerians are familiar with when there is a French electoral campaign. Everybody knows that Algeria is often a good horse to flog when top jobs are at stake and things do not seem about to change.

Security Services Say 23 'Terrorists' Killed

LD0301195095 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The security services announced that their forces had eliminated 23 terrorists between last Saturday [31 December] and Sunday. A security services' statement issued today pointed out that three terrorists were killed in an ambush set last Saturday in Oued Toub municipality in Skikda province. The security services succeeded in recovering a machine gun, two hunting rifles, six hand-grenades, and a small pair of binoculars. In the same day, the security services killed two criminals in Douar Cherifia in Souma municipality, Blida province. The security services' statement added that, due to precise information, their forces succeeded in killing a terrorist in Yakouren Forest in Tizi Ouzou province, and recovered seven hunting rifles and seven tents. The statement added that the security services killed five terrorists on the outskirts of the city of Lakhdaria in Bouira province last Sunday, and recovered three hunting rifles and two pistols. The same statement added that three terrorists have also been killed at Haizer municipality in the same province, one terrorist in Tipaza province, and another in Media province. In Jijel province, the security services succeeded in killing five terrorists and recovered five hunting rifles and a pistol in Kaous municipality. In N'Gaous municipality in Batna province, a terrorist was killed and a pistol was recovered. Lastly, the security services killed a terrorist and recovered a hunting rifle and a hand-grenade during this operation in Tlemcen province.

Hijacker Said One of Tazult Prison Escapees

NC3112125494 Paris AFP in English 1209 GMT 31 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Algiers, Dec 31 (AFP) - One of the four Algerian hijackers of a French Airbus was among 1,000 Islamic militants who staged a jail break from an Algerian prison early this year, the daily Le Matin reported Saturday [31 December].

The hijacker, who has been formally identified as Makhlouf Benguettaf, was killed on Monday by crack French police along with the other three militants who had hijacked the plane at Algiers airport.

Benguettaf, a 25-year old activist of the banned Islamic Salvation Front, was wounded in a clash with security forces in late 1992 and sentenced to 15 years prison, the paper said.

The prisoners broke out of Tazult-Lambese prison last March.

The FIS was banned after Algerian authorities canceled elections in January 1992 that the militants were poised to win.

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FLN To Attempt National Reconciliation

LD0301194695 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The National Liberation Front's Political Bureau met yesterday and decided to put forward the idea of holding a national reconciliation and concord conference, which was included in the Central Committee's political decision, to a number of parties, organizations, and national figures. It has also decided to start making preparatory contacts this week with the sides concerned.

Tobacco, Gasoline Prices Raised

LD0201191295 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 2 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] People awoke today to hear about new price increases of ordinary and super gasoline and tobacco prices. [passage omitted]

With regard to ordinary and high quality gasoline, there have been two price hikes in less than three months. According to the concerned ministry, and as explained by the director for competition and prices at the Ministry of Trade, the new price increases come within the protection of comprehensive financial balances.

The increase of the price of high quality gasoline by 40 centimes and ordinary gasoline by 1.10 dinars comes within the context of the reasonable and objective seasonal readjustment of some oil products. [passage omitted]

Energy Minister on Tariffs, Electricity, Gas

LD0301175995 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Industry and Energy Minister Amar Mekhloufi held a news conference devoted to the energy tariffs at his ministry today. Among the things which Mekhloufi mentioned was that the recent increases in petrol were natural, because those materials were not among the basic commodities if compared with gas and electricity. As for the Industry and Energy Ministry's program, the minister talked about five-year plans in the spheres of the electrification of rural area and gas distribution. Concerning electricity, the ministry was attempting, from this year and over the next five years, to make electricity accessible in the rural areas so that its average at the level of each province would reach 92 percent. The current national average reached 94 percent, but at varying averages from one province to another. At a time when the electricity coverage reached 97 percent in some provinces, it did not exceed 86 percent in others. According to Amar Mekhloufi, the ministry's aim was to connect electricity to more than 400,000 families. As for the distribution of natural gas, the minister said that this sector was witnessing great delay in realization, that the state has left the sphere of gas expansion to the enterprises, but that these companies did not manage to fulfill their tasks because of internal problems. The projects would start this year.

Discovery of 8 Oil Fields Announced

LD0301214795 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Eight oil fields and other oil explorations were some of the 1994 achievements of the Algerian organization SONATRACH and a number of other foreign companies that have been working in partnership with SONATRACH. Here is Omar Hellas with some more details:

[Hellas] After a full year of activity, SONATRACH has been evaluating its achievements. Eight new oil fields have been discovered in the last year. These include three oil fields which were actually been discovered by SONATRACH itself. The rest were discovered by its partners who were allotted a number of oil bearing areas in Algeria.

SONATRACH technical sources have valued this newly discovered wealth at 300 million cubic meters of oil and 68 billion cubic meters of gas in addition to an important quantity of other types of oil.

Most of these discoveries, SONATRACH sources said, were in the Sahara desert, and to be exact, in the Illizi Basin. This once again confirmed the fact that the area is sleeping on an important wealth estimated at billions of dollars.

The largest and most important of these discoveries is situated in the first El-Merk-East area. They were discovered by the North American Company and their production capacity is estimated at 45,000 cubic meters of gas per hour; 24,000 cubic meters per hour of varied types of oil, as well as 54,000 cubic meters per hour of condensates from a reserve basin at a depth of 3,400 meters.

There were other discoveries which are no less important. Most of them are spread in the Illizi Basin. They were also discovered in collaboration with SONATRACH partners. Preliminary estimates of these new discoveries were assessed to have considerable production capacities.

Egypt

Mubarak Interviewed on Local, Regional Issues

NC0201175895 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 1 Jan 95 pp 3-6

[Interview with President Husni Mubarak by Jalal Duwaydar in Cairo; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Duwaydar] Mr. President; on behalf of the AL-AKHBAR family, I would like to thank you for granting us the opportunity to conduct this

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interview with the advent of the new year. We hope it will be a year of prosperity for you, Egypt, all the Egyptians, and all the Arabs.

The closing days of 1994 witnessed a surprise summit meeting in Alexandria, which brought you together with King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad. Can we say that the summit was part of Egypt's constant efforts to bring the Arabs together and achieve unity of Arab ranks vis-a-vis developments and transformations in the regional and international arenas?

[Mubarak] Although the summit was not announced before hand, it was not a surprise summit. The idea emerged last October. That is when preparations for the summit started.

In November, Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' came to Cairo. I entrusted him with a message to President al-Asad on that summit and its objectives. After he conveyed the message, he contacted Minister 'Amr Musa to tell him that President al-Asad welcomed the summit. I later visited Damascus and discussed with President al-Asad the invitation to the summit and the topics it would discuss. In the meantime, I contacted the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd, and we reviewed the issues to be discussed at the summit as well as the possibility of expanding it. But we settled on a tripartite summit.

During the Islamic summit in Casablanca, I instructed the foreign minister to meet with his counterparts Sa'ud al-Faysal and Faruq al-Shar'. This was agreed between me and both President al-Asad and King Fahd before I left for Morocco. I instructed him to discuss details pertaining to the tripartite summit. The foreign ministers suggested that the summit be held in late December and they agreed on the proposed date. Since President al-Asad and King Fahd did not participate in Casablanca summit, we held contacts on the proposed date. On 24 December, I instructed the foreign minister to go to Riyadh with a message to the custodian of the two holy mosques about the invitation to the summit. At that meeting, the issues to be discussed at the summit and the final agreement on the date and venue of the summit were discussed.

At the suggestion of King Fahd and President al-Asad, we agreed to hold the summit in a quiet city. I proposed Alexandria or Aswan. We agreed on Alexandria, where all the facilities and accommodations are available.

[Duwaydar] How can pan-Arab security be achieved in the absence of confidence and considering the weakened Arab solidarity; and, what are the elements of Arab strength that facilitate such an objective?

[Mubarak] As Arabs, we will not continue our disagreements forever. But under current world conditions, Arab cohesion must be restored and Arabs should think about safeguarding their national security. Our cooperation in its various aspects enhances our pan- Arab security, which is not restricted to the military aspect; it should include political, economic, and other aspects. The world is heading toward using blocs to serve their interests. The European, American, and Asian unions are examples.

Unity of Arab action cannot be achieved unless there is solidarity and togetherness. All this should be based on mutual confidence, abandoning aggression, and mutual respect for sovereignty and borders.

[Duwaydar] Does this summit fall within the framework of closing the Arab ranks and clearing the Arab air to achieve unity?

[Mubarak] There is no doubt that clearing the Arab air and exerting efforts for Arab solidarity are the most important topics for us. Despite all difficulties, we are making ceaseless efforts toward this goal. Arab contacts currently focus on overcoming the repercussions of the Gulf war, notably the divisions in the Arab ranks and their serious impact on Arab solidarity. To emerge from this predicament that endangers the Arab structure, contacts were held on all levels to resolve Arab differences and prepare the atmosphere for reconciliation. These contacts involved Libyan revolution leader brother Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, who believes in unified Arab action and seeks to clear the Arab air. My constant contacts and meetings with the brother leaders of the Gulf countries are part of these efforts. Also, my stopover in Algiers and talks with President Zeroual and my talks with King Hassan II in Casablanca, with Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan of the United Arab Emirates, and with the amir of Kuwait fall within this framework. King Husayn's visit to Cairo and Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's later visit to Cairo are also in line with these efforts

[Duwaydar] What were the most important issues discussed at the Alexandria summit?

[Mubarak] The most important outcome of the discussions was the agreement and emphasis on the importance of our nation moving to horizons that are commensurate with the current stage and developments in the regional and international arenas. We agreed on the need to exert efforts to resolve inter-Arab differences on a sound basis. The summit also emphasized the importance of the Arab League playing an effective role in joint Arab action since it is the canopy of all Arabs and the mother organization of all Arab groupings. Another important issue that we discussed is the peace process and the positive stance adopted by Syria to achieve a comprehensive peace. As part of our endeavors to achieve Arab reconciliation, we agreed to call on Iraq to implement the Security Council resolutions. Out of faith in Arab resources and potential and their role in strengthening the Arab position regionally and internationally, agreement was reached at the summit on bolstering economic and trade cooperation aimed at creating an Arab economic structure to serve all Arab peoples. [passage omitted]

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[Duwaydar] Is raising wages part of the fruits of economic reforms?

[Mubarak] After the economic reforms succeed in reducing inflation, I hope that wages will be in line with prices in the years to come. We constantly seek to raise wages to a point that will not lead to a balance of payments deficit or to higher inflation as a result of resorting to printing banknotes. Inflation means a constant rise in prices and the inability to stop it from increasing. It is a matter of supply and demand. In this respect, I would like to say that the state is eager to offer every support and backing to the citizens to ensure them a decent life. A real increase in production would definitely be coupled with increase in income. This would be a genuine increase that would not cause a rise in inflation.

[Duwaydar] It seems that talk about a cabinet reshuffle comes up at specific times, particularly just before a new parliamentary session. What is behind the rumors about a reshuffle and what are the basic elements and requirements for a reshuffle?

[Mubarak] Cabinet reshuffles have become the subject of seasonal rumors. My policy is that change is not a goal in itself; it is not associated with a specific season or occasion. Change must depend on the public interest. Moreover, stability is a basic factor in implementing the state's policies and plans that serve citizens' interests in the end. Anyway, I remind those who talk about change that I have changed 75 ministers in past years. When I feel that the situation warrants a cabinet reshuffle, I will make the decision to change. I want to say that selecting a minister has become a very hard task nowadays. People who are selected for that position apologize, because it gives them a heavy burden. Moreover, the financial aspect is not tempting; the majority of those who are nominated lose money, particularly if they have private business. [passage omitted]

Rumors about a cabinet reshuffle are sometimes spread by those who are seeking a ministerial position. They start the rumors, then believe them.

There can be no accomplishments under constant change. In the advanced world, we find that German Chancellor Kohl's government has been in power for three terms (12 years). Gonzales' government in Spain is 16 years old and former British Prime Minister Mrs. Thatcher stayed in her post for over 12 years. When it comes to Egypt, Dr. Sidqi's government took the responsibility in 1987. It is seven years old. This government worked tremendously hard in various fields and has considerable accomplishments that would not have been possible without stability in the government. [passage omitted]

[Duwaydar] The trade fraud law that was promulgated recently reflects the importance of discipline, compliance, as well as firmness in enforcing such laws. What measures could be taken to achieve this?

[Mubarak] I hope 1995 will see more citizens ending their passive attitude. If they see a bad or rotten product, they should report it and refrain from buying the product. To give up a certain product will not kill a man. Refraining from buying such products will make them unmarketable. Besides, when you report such a product, the competent authorities will act immediately. This is how the issue of foul products was uncovered. It started when people abandoned their passive attitude and reported incidents. This is a good sign. I appeal to the private sector, merchants, and importers to check the quality of their products to avoid further aggravation. [passage omitted]

[Duwaydar] There are contradictory opinions and currents regarding privatization and the complete turn toward market economy. How is our economic program proceeding amid these difficulties?

[Mubarak] We are proceeding slowly with our privatization policy, in order to realize benefits for the citizens and guarantee jobs for workers. We have before us many examples of countries that were hasty in their steps toward privatization. We must learn from these examples in order to formulate our own special vision of how to proceed with our privatization process.

[Duwaydar] Mr. President, some people are saying that reforming the conditions of the public sector companies is faltering. To what extent is this so?

[Mubarak] Some foreign newspapers are making such allegations at the urging of certain concerns, saying that the process of selling the public sector companies is proceeding slowly.

These people think reform is a process of selling the public sector companies as quickly as possible and at any price. From our viewpoint, we cannot accept such a definition.

The program we are carrying out has the objective of serving our national interests. The style we have chosen preserves the interests of this nation. I have said repeatedly that the objective of reforming the public sector companies is to preserve national projects, to work to increase their production capacity, and to create more job opportunities. We will not sell the property of the people at just any price and to any party that is willing to buy them.

[Duwaydar] Is there any basis to this criticism?

[Mubarak] The figures that are claimed for the sales of the public sector's unproductive assets and shares to citizens provides irrefutable evidence of the inaccuracy of this criticism. The figures regarding the total sale of public sector companies and institutions in all world countries are published in specialized magazines around the world. A comparison between these figures and what we have actually achieved confirms that our achievements in this sector are much better than in most world countries.

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[Duwaydar] Mr. President, some people are wondering what guarantees are there for getting the best price for the assets or shares we might sell.

[Mubarak] I reviewed these guarantees myself with the government before we started the public sector companies' reform program. They are published in a booklet that has been distributed to all People's Assembly members and universities. This booklet is also sold in bookstores at a nominal price. Nevertheless, I shall convey these guarantees to the readers of AL-AKHBAR. First: For any company whose shares we decide to offer for public sale will be evaluated by a group of experts of various specialties. This evaluation will then be presented to the board of directors of each company (all board members come from outside the company) to get their opinion on it and amend it if they wish. The report of the company's board of directors is reviewed by the minister of the business sector and his technical team. It is then referred to the central accounting authority, which falls under the People's Assembly. The latter will review it too and express an opinion on whether it accepts or rejects it or whether it wishes to amend it. Finally, all these studies are presented to the General Assembly for a final decision to be taken on the matter. After the Assembly reaches a decision, all these various stages are documented in the company's file. This file is open to any person or group who wishes to view it or have a look at it. [passage omitted]

[Duwaydar] The Paris Club met a few days ago to consider writing off the debts of some Third World states. It actually decided to write off some of these debts. Egypt was expected to be among those countries, so that the last debt installment, $4 billion, might be written off. Does this mean that disagreements persist and that they were behind the postponement of the Club's consideration of writing off the last installment?

[Mubarak] Without getting into details, I confirm that the program we agreed on with the IMF was 100 percent Egyptian and was compatible with Egyptian interests. We were indeed in need of economic reform; it was inevitable despite the hardships we have had to put up with. Last February we reached a draft agreement with the IMF. But they suddenly came up with new things that I could not possibly do. I believe that they understand this position. But the matter requires further negotiations. We hope they will understand our position. We are 100 percent eager to protect our economy. But some things could not be accepted, since they are not in the interest of our economy. There are differences of views, but I hope we will reach something. I can say that there is progress in our negotiations with the IMF and that 1995 will see more progress in that direction. [passage omitted]

[Duwaydar] The year 1994 witnessed a natural disaster in southern Egypt governorates. The state acted rapidly and firmly in the interest of the citizens. Why did we not see the parties playing a role, even though it was a national disaster involving the masses?

[Mubarak] It was the state which moved and shouldered the burden alone; it provided everything, immediately built relief camps, conducted rescue operations, and provided relief aid, covers, and medicine to our afflicted sons. Almost 10,000 families were affected. The state will provide the necessary credit to rebuild the villages and homes. In 1995 we will see the afflicted citizens return to their homes after reconstruction. The state alone will shoulder the burden of reconstruction—300 to 400 million pounds. The donations we have received from friendly states, businessmen, and individuals do not exceed 60 million pounds. Thus, it is obvious that reconstruction will cost many times the donations, and the state will bear the cost in spite of our economic conditions.

Unfortunately, the parties' role was limited to some visits to the afflicted areas. The same thing happened during the earthquake disaster. But some people built one or two tents to hang their propaganda on and invite photographers to take pictures. [passage omitted]

[Duwaydar] How can belonging to and love for Egypt become the essence of political activity in Egypt? Will particular party newspapers stop supporting certain countries that harbor hatred to Egypt and its people in word and deed?

[Mubarak] I hope that these party newspaper will follow the example of newspapers in democratic countries, where newspapers side with national issues and always work for the public interest. Nothing could tempt these papers to stand against their countries' public interest. We can see current and former world heads of state and party leaders who differ inside their countries. However, out of a sense of national affiliation and respect for their countries, they do not allow themselves to attack their countries or leaders abroad. This is a national obligation which is above everything else. As a matter of fact, there are parties whose leaders and reporters honor this national obligation.

[Duwaydar] I would like to ask you, Mr. President, as an Egyptian citizen, if you are for elections on the basis of party lists or individual tickets?

[Mubarak] As a citizen, I tend to favor the individual ticket to which we have grown accustomed. In my capacity as the National Democratic Party [NDP] leader, I left it to the General Secretariat to discuss this issue with openness and seriousness in the governorates at the level of secretariats. My goal was to get acquainted with the various views on a suitable system of elections. However, I will not deny that I favor the individual ticket system. After the NDP General Secretariat and the general secretariats of the governorates discussed all aspects of the views put forward, they decided to submit their report to me—which I have not read yet—outlining their conclusions. However, I learned that the majority of the NDP favors the individual system. However, let us also examine the report for the view of the minority in the NDP. It is necessary to note here that it was the

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national dialogue for which I called that opened up the discussion on this issue. As president of all Egyptians, I declared that we will respond positively to the recommendations of the national dialogue to serve the public interest. [passage omitted]

[Duwaydar] Can we say that 1995 will witness the decline of wave of terrorism?

[Mubarak] The people of Egypt were the real champions in 1994 in rejecting and confronting the terrorism that threatens their and their sons' future. This confrontation by all the people's establishments and all citizens will continue. We hope that this wave of terrorism will decline further, God willing. Egypt is protected by God Almighty and will triumph, as it has always done, over all plots hatched against it, God willing. I hope that this wave will continue to decline and that tourism will flourish. Tourism will revive the national economy and provide income to a large segment of the people. [passage omitted]

[Duwaydar] The drive toward a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, does it affect efforts to provide the necessary support for our armed forces, particularly since peace requires the presence of deterrence power?

[Mubarak] Every Egyptian should be proud of having strong armed forces. The armed forces provide back stability and sovereignty, and their role in peace is no less important than their role in war.

During the October war, the armed forces numbered one million. We developed our armament and then reduced their numbers to the minimum possible so that we could spend enough on them and maintain their strength, because they sustain our stability and sovereignty. Every citizen should be proud that we have strong armed forces that guarantee his stability and safeguard his gains.

Moreover, the armed forces are capable of coping with disasters with the resources available to them. During the rainstorms, it was the armed forces that built relief camps and provided relief aid. The same thing happened during the earthquake. Even when sea ports are jammed, the armed forces transport units intervene to solve the problem. They work in each and every field. The armed forces have pharmaceutical factories. They give their surplus to pharmaceutical companies to sell. [passage omitted]

[Duwaydar] Experience shows that there can be no peace or war without Egypt and that there can be no Arab reconciliation without Egypt. Everyone looks to Egypt to realize that hope. What efforts is Egypt making in that context?

[Mubarak] I have said on numerous occasions that we were on the verge of achieving Arab reconciliation when Kuwait was invaded. All that remained was to reconcile Iraq and Syria. Iraq's occupation of Kuwait broke the Arab world's back. It debased Arabs before the world and diminished the significance of their views. Let us go back in history to the time when late president Anwar al-Sadat signed a peace agreement with Israel. The Arab world stayed in discord from 1978 until 1988, ten whole years.

Egypt will always have a pivotal role; there can be no war or peace without Egypt and there can be no Arab reconciliation or solidarity in the absence of the weight it carries, its resources, and the moderate initiatives it takes toward brother Arabs. Reconciliation will take time. Anyway, we are doing our utmost to achieve reconciliation, but we are encountering obstacles. The situation might be better than what it was in 1992. This was reflected during the recent Islamic conference. This helps us provide a favorable climate for these efforts and take a further step.

Egypt will always be the key to stability, peace, development, and growth. It will continue to bring the Arab brothers together. Without it there can be no Arab solidarity or order. The Arab citizens have their hearts in Egypt. Those who imagine that they can marginalize Egypt's role or end its leadership are living a big fantasy. They think that it could be marginalized because of its stability, wise and logical policy, commitment to principles and values, and its refraining from interfering in others' affairs or stirring up trouble. This is odd. Do we have to stir up trouble in the region and act as though we were solving problems to stop them from saying that nonsense?

[Duwaydar] All observers and people who have followed the Islamic summit agree that your presence at the summit and your efforts played an important role in calming things down and defusing the tension. This allowed resolutions to be passed in a calm and positive manner. What factors were these efforts were based on?

[Mubarak] Our objective was to work to decrease the pressure on the Iraqi people. The Iraqi vice president attended the summit. In fact, he was realistic during his participation in the conference's sessions. This helped to calm things down. In general, sound thinking prevailed in the atmosphere of Morocco's Islamic summit.

At a private meeting, I spoke with King Hassan II of Morocco on the Iraqi stance and its recent recognition of Kuwait's borders. Despite the fact that some say they do not trust Saddam Husayn's words, I believe that this a correct step. I hope it will be followed by other steps.

At any rate, our efforts are concentrated on the scope of Arab reconciliation, restoring solidarity, and containing any problems and differences among Arab countries. We do not hesitate to offer any help in bringing closer viewpoints between brothers and to bolster Arab ranks. By nature, I do not tend to favor disputes or problems. I like constant cooperation and I try to establish such cooperation. [passage omitted]

[Duwaydar] In your speech at the summit you spoke about the suffering of the Iraqi people and the efforts

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required to end it, despite the Arab countries' stand on Iraq. You affirmed the need to distinguish between the suffering of the Iraqi people and the role Saddam Husayn is playing in destroying Arab solidarity. Will 1995 witness the reaching of this objective?

[Mubarak] The role Saddam Husayn has played is a fact, but the result is that the Iraqi people are suffering. They are an Arab Muslim people, our brothers, sons, and friends. I was deeply saddened by events, particularly since President Saddam Husayn and I had good relations with each other and have known each other for a long time—ever since he and I were vice presidents. I was deeply saddened and tried the impossible—to change his mind on this matter.

Now, whenever I can, I call for us to find an equation to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people, without thinking that a foreign power should topple Saddam Husayn. His staying in power or not depends on the will of the people. Egypt is now working on uniting all efforts to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people and help them emerge from their crisis. I hope 1995 will be a year of progress toward ending the suffering of the fraternal Iraqi people.

We should not forget that the many meetings, contacts, and talk about this issue are beneficial and help a great deal. We see some people in the Arab world now repeating what I used to say before. The issue will take time and we will inevitably reach a solution. We are doing the impossible to realize our goal. All the Arab countries expressed their desire to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people. This will soon help in finding a solution to this problem

[Duwaydar] Will Egypt's application to join the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] as an observer affect its pioneering role in the Arab east?

[Mubarak] I would like to repeat that we are not going to join the AMU as member. We are seeking to win observer status to generate a positive atmosphere among the member states apart from all differences. Thus, Egypt welcomes every Arab gathering in the Maghreb or the east. These are all Arab groupings of countries that are members of the Arab League. In the same vein, we in the past welcomed joining the Arab Cooperation Council. We are clear in rejecting the policy of forming axes, both in the past and in the future. Egypt will always be for all Arabs. Our relations with the Gulf countries are excellent and there are numerous similar examples. The United States is a member of the Middle East region [as published], the American states, and NATO.

[Duwaydar] Regarding the Mediterranean Club, what does Egypt gain by joining the countries of this club?

[Mubarak] The world currently is forming economic cartels, and we are concerned not to be excluded from these cartels. We have interests in Europe because we encourage exports and obtain aid from it. Therefore, we cannot distance ourselves from all economic blocs. The United States and Latin America have their own cartels; so does Europe. The Mediterranean Club will attract many countries for economic reasons, such as those who favor the Middle East Market concept. Therefore, we must not lag behind or we will find ourselves far behind. We must not be aloof but must join these cartels, do our share, help, and act in the interest of the country and the people. In everything we do we seek whatever benefits it can bring to our country. Our constant moves in the international arenas are aimed at Egypt's interests. Our joining the Mediterranean Club is intended to serve Egypt's interests. Anything that serves Egypt's interests would definitely serve the Egyptian people's interests, primarily the Egyptian citizens. When an Egyptian travels abroad he gets respect and appreciation, which he would not have found had Egypt been an isolationist country. So we must be active in the international arena.

[Duwaydar] How long will Egypt remain patient with the excesses of the [Sudanese] al-Bashir regime against Egypt, excesses that have led to a deterioration in the historic and eternal relations between Egypt and Sudan?

[Mubarak] Whatever happens, Egypt's ties with Sudan will not be severed. If a certain group behaves badly, this will not affect the relations between the Egyptian and Sudanese peoples. We take no notice of verbal attacks, irresponsible behavior, or provocative actions. Their newspapers and radio reports seek to defame Egypt in order to draw reactions that they could exploit in their domestic policy. However, no one outside Sudan reads their papers or listens to their radios. We do not respond to their lies, which they tell to deceive and mislead. We hope that they will wake up and realize that Sudan's interests lie in good ties with Egypt. At several international forums we refused to vote against Sudan even though they voted against Egypt's membership in the preferential trade agreement of the East African countries. We do not deal with individuals, but we are eager to maintain good ties with the Sudanese people because we belong together. We have Sudanese families living permanently in Egypt and their sons attend Egyptian schools. Not a single Sudanese citizen in Egypt has ever felt any persecution, contrary to what they do to the Egyptians in Sudan.

[Duwaydar] In 1994, you accompanied Yasir 'Arafat when he entered Rafah for the first time after the Gaza-Jericho agreement. The Palestinian Authority is now working on its own territory, but they are not getting funds. You warned against the risks involved in such a delay and stressed that donor states must provide the Palestinian Authority with funds as soon as possible to establish stability in Gaza. How do you view developments in this connection?

[Mubarak] First of all, 'Arafat is the chairman of the PLO, which worked from others' land—from Tunis, Cairo, or Damascus. That is why they did not experience any trouble. But when the Palestinians signed the peace

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agreement, they wanted—and so did we—to establish stability in the region so that efforts and funds could be dedicated to production and raising the standards of living.

We are keeping our word; we still want stability in the region and are working for that goal along with the Palestinian neighbors. When I accompanied 'Arafat up to Gaza, he was going to his homeland and his soil. To achieve stability, 'Arafat must obtain the funds and grants promised by world states. He will use these funds in launching projects and creating jobs for the Palestinians. If these states find a problem in giving these grants to 'Arafat, they can always supervise the projects themselves.

[Duwaydar] At the end of last year, Israeli President Ezer Weizmann visited Egypt and held talks. You were asked about visiting Israel. What about that?

[Mubarak] The questions raised by the Israeli media create a tempest in a teacup. I have no sensitivities about visiting Israel. I will visit it at the proper time.

[Duwaydar] Are there problems along the Palestinian track?

[Mubarak] I expect these problems to be resolved through contacts between 'Arafat and Rabin and other Israeli officials in implementing the Declaration of Principles. I believe that this will help a lot. I also expect considerable progress along the Syrian track in 1995. What enhances this optimism is the meeting announced in Washington recently between Syrian and Israeli officials to eliminate obstacles and reach an agreement. We are doing our utmost in this connection.

[Duwaydar] Some American mass media have launched organized distortion campaigns against Egypt and its leadership every now and then. Are there reasons for these purposeful campaigns?

[Mubarak] I do not want to get into that subject. These campaigns have specific goals and I do not want to elaborate much on this. I only want to affirm that Egypt's decisions are its own and seek its own interests. Once again, I do not want to talk about these campaigns and those behind them.

Our relations with the United States are good. If there are differences, this is natural between states and friends. We are talking them out in a way that does not infringe on our sovereignty and interest or the interests of our people.

If the press there, in order to serve some ulterior motive, is attacking us or is being pushed by someone to attack us, our press has answered back. Our newspapers are capable of answering back. The press knows everything; we have nothing to hide or fear and everything is clear to see.

Relations with the United States are good, as I said. President Clinton sent me a message when I was in Casablanca. I replied two days ago. This confirms what I said about Egyptian-American relations. U.S. Vice President Al Gore telephoned me on Friday [30 December]—the day before yesterday—and reiterated that ties between the two countries are excellent. During the telephone conversation, we discussed his upcoming visit to Egypt in March, which is designed to consolidate economic cooperation between the two countries.

[Duwaydar] Some analyses say that behind the call for the Middle Eastern concept is an attempt to annihilate the Arabs as an entity and provide an opportunity for hegemony and control by some countries over the course of events in the region.

[Mubarak] Actually, such talk is not realistic. The Arab world does not consist of incompetent states. It understands everything that is going on. Relations between Egypt and Israel are 17 years old. We deal with Israel cordially. We should not be afraid of or shaken by such proposals or projects for the region. We need to think about those things that promote our interests.

[Duwaydar] Those who are worried claim that there is an attempt to detract from Egypt's leadership status in the region.

[Mubarak] Egypt's leadership status is firm and no one can take it away from us. Egypt is a country that has a history going back over 50 centuries. It has 13 universities, which we are developing in accordance with the most modern technological methods. Egypt is a country that has over 75 percent of the world's historic sites. The first government or administration that was set up in the world was in Egypt, on the banks of the River Nile during the times of the ancient Egyptians.

In addition, Egypt has thinkers, scientists, and intellectuals in all parts of the world, which makes it impossible for someone to detract from this leadership.

[Duwaydar] Mr. President, before becoming president and the father of the big Egyptian family, you were a father of a small family. How do you deal with your family's problems? On what occasions do you gather together?

[Mubarak] My family and I adhere to principles and values. We meet almost daily, and frankness always characterizes our discussions and dialogue. My children realize the responsibility of being the president's children. They shun any action that looks suspicious. They always listen to my advice.

There are some malicious rumor-mongering people who spread lies—I repeat, lies with no basis or meaning—about my family. They do this out of bad intentions and for some ulterior motives. I have no interest in meeting the wishes of these people by responding to their lies. My indifference stems from my full confidence that lying cannot go on forever. The truth will soon emerge, sooner or later, for the people. This matter requires some patience.

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Ever since I assumed office, I have followed the motto of not allowing anyone to curry favor, no nepotism, and no covering up for corruption. This is a basic characteristic of government that I am proud of and adhere to. [passage omitted]

Mubarak Briefs Press on Summit, Peres Talks

NC0301131195 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1106 GMT 3 Jan 95

[News conference by President Husni Mubarak to Israeli correspondents "following his meeting with Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres" in Cairo on 3 January—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Unidentified correspondent] What can you tell us about the results of the Alexandria summit?

[Mubarak] I would like to make it clear that the Alexandria summit was not directed against Israel, although there was such propaganda in your country. Egypt works only for peace. It makes an effort for the sake of peace. There is nothing at all that is being directed against Israel. I have heard some talk about this point in particular: that this meeting was held 48 hours after Mr. Rabin's visit to Oman. The facts are different: We had been preparing for the Alexandria meeting for some time. I even told the Israeli president during his visit to Egypt that I was going to meet with President Hafiz al-Asad on 27 and 28 December and that King Fahd might join us. I don't know why you keep coming up with speculations.

[Correspondent] What about the resolutions passed by the conference?

[Mubarak] We passed nothing except what was contained in the communique we issued. We passed no secret resolutions. We discussed the issue at hand and adopted no other resolutions except those mentioned in the communique [preceding word in English].

[Correspondent] Did King Fahd promise to exert pressure on the Gulf countries to prevent them from being hasty in normalizing relations with Israel until progress is made....

[Mubarak, interrupting] I am telling you that King Fahd did not talk about this subject. Indeed, we did not even discuss Rabin's visit to Oman. Not at all. Secondly, I wish to tell you this: King Fahd wants peace. Sometimes you make strange analyses. King Fahd is always speaking about the benefits of peace. As to the Palestinians, he is speaking to them. After Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] signed the peace agreement and went to Gaza, King Fahd met with him. I believe this is a very clear sign.

[Correspondent] What is your assessment of President al-Asad's position on the peace process?

[Mubarak] President al-Asad wants peace. We are also encouraging this tendency. The theory that President al-Asad does not want peace is totally wrong.

[Correspondent] Is there anything new in President al-Asad's stance after the summit?

[Mubarak] Had there been anything new, I would have told Mr. Peres. However, al-Asad wished to raise certain points that I discussed with Peres today. We hope that these points will be resolved. I hope that we will be able to get somewhere before the middle of the year, God willing.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency, how will the results of Alexandria's tripartite summit influence the Middle East peace process?

[Mubarak] I spoke about this before. At the Alexandria summit we discussed economic cooperation and the peace process. We did not raise the subject of freezing relations with Israel during that meeting.

[Correspondent] What can you tell us about the normalization of Arab ties with Israel?

[Mubarak] Every country is free to normalize relations with Israel as it sees fit. We do not object to anyone's actions in this respect.

[Correspondent] Was the Alexandria meeting a prelude to the formation of a new axis in the Arab world?

[Mubarak, laughing] Why a new axis? Egypt and Syria have always had relations with each other. So have Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The meeting was originally planned for me and President al-Asad. I told Mr. Ezer Weizman when he was here: Al-Asad will come and I will also try to persuade the brother Saudi monarch to attend the meeting also so that he can help. During our discussions we said nothing against peace. There was not a single point directed against Israel, or advocating a freeze of relations with Israel, or as they have said: slow down the normalization. This never happened. [preceding seven words in English]

[Correspondent] Your Excellency, doubtlessly Egyptian-Israeli relations are slightly cool because of the failure to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. What is your excellency's stance on this issue?

[Mubarak] You will not sign and we will not sign. We can discuss this subject among ourselves. As to the question of cool relations, this is a subject that you, in Israel, are inventing.

[Correspondent] What is Your Excellency's reaction to the Israeli Government's decision yesterday on settlement in the Efrat area?

[Mubarak] Actually, I did not discuss this affair with Mr. Shim'on Peres today. I do not wish to go into it any further now.

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[Correspondent] What results do you expect from this new round of negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians. Do you think it will be successful?

[Mubarak] It must succeed. Peace is important. I believe that both sides want peace. Success on the Palestinian track will pave the way for success in the entire region.

Sidqi Delivers Government Policy Statement

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[Government policy statement delivered by Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi at the People's Assembly in Cairo—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Mr. Speaker, brothers and sisters members of the esteemed Assembly, may peace and God's mercy and blessings be with you, happy new year. I wish you all success in your new parliamentary session, with which the esteemed Assembly crowns its constitutional term.

I am pleased to begin this statement by extending sincere congratulations to all of you on Dr. Ahmad Fathi Surur's gaining the International Parliamentary Union chairmanship. What adds to the significance of this victory is that it follows Egypt's gaining the UN secretary general and the Arab League secretary general posts. All this reflects the international community's appreciation of Egypt's leading role in keeping world peace and security. This also reflects the world's recognition of Egypt's ability to practice civilized democracy.

On this occasion I am pleased and honored to extend all thanks and appreciation to President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, who restored to Egypt this standing of such magnitude and influence. Egypt was also chosen to be the venue of the UN International Conference on Population and Development in view of its excellent international standing.

Egypt's performance in hosting and arranging the conference and its discussions during the conference were top level. The conference discussed all economic, human, and cultural aspects of population's relationship with development. The conference provided an excellent opportunity for a free dialogue that revealed Islam's true face and Muslims' civilized image.

The Islamic countries managed to convince the conference of the need to respect cultural diversity among nations and that each country has the right to cling to its own values and traditions and reject any encroachment on them.

As regards economic and social reform, the harvest of the reform's first phase has been unrestrained and the object of appreciation and admiration by every impartial person. The current and forthcoming phases of reform are characterized by the extension of development and progress to all parts of Egypt, achieving balance in development among the governorates, intensifying the efforts to secure the use of energies in all sectors, expansion of new urban communities, and a serious handling of unemployment and the transfer of modern technology that suits Egypt. While Egypt is striving to improve its domestic, regional, and world situation, the advocates of darkness and ignorance are seeking to undermine the internal stability to appease foreign forces that aim to wreck the country's interests and destroy the symbols of science, civilization, and enlightenment in Egypt. We are all confident that the Egyptian nation is able to safeguard its security and democracy against a minority seeking to impose its hegemony on all the people in the country by terrorism and threat.

In light of the president's directives in his speech opening this session on 12 November 1994 and within the context of Constitution and law, I am honored to deliver the government's policy statement which complements previous policy statements of the government, taking into consideration the circumstances of the current stage.

During President Mubarak's era Egyptian society saw many reforms that rectified the course of the Egyptian economy and made it capable of continuous growth. More than 246 billion pounds were invested in the process of replacing the old infrastructure, modernizing production sites and building new ones, and in financing manpower development projects.

Society successfully remedied the majority of the flaws that had heretofore hindered its capacity for growth. This was done through the adoption of market policies permitting flexibility in economic planning, allocation of resources, and the use of prices reflecting the real value of commodities and services.

The first result of these reforms was a stability of the general status of the national economy. This was necessary to move ahead toward the stage of investment and growth.

In future, the government plans to expand the industrial and agricultural production bases to provide new job opportunities for young people, attain high productivity levels, and raise the living standards of Egyptians.

I wish to mention the following notable policies that were adopted to achieve the above objectives.

First, maintaining economic stability: This was done by controlling inflation, the deficit in the state's general budget, transactions with the outside world, and our foreign debts. Our financial and currency policies succeeded in reducing the inflation rate from 21.1 percent in 1991/1992 to approximately 7 percent in August 1994. God willing, we expect inflation to go down to 5 percent in 1994/1995. The deficit in the state's general budget fell to 2.6 percent of the gross national product in 1993/1994 in comparison with 24.4 percent in 1987/

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1988. God willing, the budget deficit will be reduced to only 1.5 percent in 1994/1995. The balance of payments has been showing a surplus since 1990/1991 in contrast with constant earlier deficits. This has helped the country to amass a currency reserve in U.S. dollars which amounted to $17 billion in September 1994. The Central Bank is now examining ways of making optimal use of this reserve and obtaining the largest possible revenue from it. Foreign debt was reduced from 79.7 percent of the gross national product in 1990/1991 to 56 percent in 1993/1994. The debt-servicing burden fell from 25.6 percent of our foreign currency revenues in 1990/1991 to 15 percent in 1993/1994. There will be further reductions in future in the debt-servicing burden, God willing, after the industrial countries write off a third portion of our debt to them as agreed.

On the other hand, a basic phase of the economic reform has ended. It basically aimed to rationalize the demand side by implementing an integrated package of fiscal and monetary policies that are effective in improving the economic situation. The government is working to complement this phase with another one depending on the stimulation of the supply side by focusing on increased productivity and upgrading exports, especially after the state has reconstructed and renovated the infrastructure.

Egyptian industry is currently passing through a transition stage, aiming to enhance its role in increasing national income and upgrading production so that it will be able to compete on foreign markets. The government is seeking to encourage and back high-technology industries because these industries achieve great additional income and create broad job opportunities.

The government is interested in developing small industries by establishing complexes for these industries in the governorates and new urban areas. A map of the existing projects in the governorates is now being devised. Also under planning are the required small and medium industrial projects to feed large projects or to receive the products of existing projects and turn them into goods ready for direct use.

To increase the productivity of the public business sector, a program is currently being implemented to expand the base of private ownership in the subsidiary companies to secure revenues to contribute to reforming various supply structures, rectify the course of faltering companies, and modernize machinery and equipment. This program is being implemented rapidly, compatible with Egypt's interests.

To achieve this goal, assets of 216 companies have been evaluated up until the end of September 1994 and the evaluation of assets of the rest of the public business sector companies and their shares in other joint companies is under way. This process is conducted with help from committees of holding and subsidiary companies in most cases and with help from some consultative offices in very limited companies.

Seven new agreements have been signed in 1993-94 for oil prospecting in approximately 137,000 sq km, bringing the number of valid agreements for oil prospecting so far to 33. On 30 June 1994, the crude oil reserve rose to 3,426 million barrels, a 2-percent increase over last year, and the gas reserve rose to 4,449 million barrels, a 61 percent increase over last year.

Egypt applies various methods to increase agricultural production, including incentives for farmers to develop productivity, increasing investments for vertical and horizontal expansion, developing irrigation systems to secure water resources and increase the scope and magnitude of agricultural services.

Policies on marketing and pricing of agricultural products have substantively been amended, and recently, the cotton trade has been liberalized.

The 1994-1995 plan seeks to implement scores of projects in the area of agricultural development. They include establishing automatic service plants, spreading guidance units in villages, and promoting the technology of the seeds industry. The plan expects that local reclamation work for 120,000 feddans will be completed and cultivation started, that the infrastructure work for 104,000 feddans will be done, and that problems of reclamation and cultivation in an area of 500,000 feddans delivered to cooperative societies will be solved.

The government policy now concentrates on technological development and the transfer of suitable technological methods to Egypt in cooperation with foreign sides and states, especially the advanced states. Negotiations are currently under way to sign a new agreement with the United States, basically on the transfer of advanced technology. The agreement will allow scientific research institutions to play a major role in transferring, adapting, and developing technology.

The government is also working to strengthen the role of the private sector in the fields of investment, production, and employment. The state's effort to support private national, Arab, and foreign capital has been expanded with a view to achieving ambitious development where revenues grow on the initiative of the private sector.

In the past stage we also concentrated on addressing all restrictions that hindered the flow of investment, particularly private investment. The third 5-year development plan wants the private sector to implement 48 percent of the overall investment compared to 42 percent in the previous plan. This requires continuing efforts to remove any obstacles in the face of existing and new investments, to increase local savings and invest them in a productive manner, and to lessen the burden on investors and producers.

Reforms have also been extended to change the legislative and organizational environment in which the private sector operates. New guarantees have been emphasized to protect ownership, respect contracts, and settle

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disputes without delay or complications. Many amendments have been made to the regulations and bylaws of the agencies that deal with producers and investors to simplify procedure and curb restrictions, especially at the beginning and the end of investment. Many financial institutions, helping to employ savings in financial notes, have been established.

The government has completed drafting a law on the lease of financing, and a unified draft law on investment in Egypt is currently being prepared. These laws will soon be presented to your esteemed Assembly.

The past period has also witnessed positive factors that help reduce the burden of project financing and production cost. They include the following: Interest rates on loans have dropped; the tax on most agricultural and industrial machines has been reduced to the minimum, 5 percent; and customs on a number of capital goods have been reduced, treating all capital goods equally at a unified tax rate of 10 percent. This treatment is expected to be generalized to cover all imported capital goods in the next stage.

Also, the government is providing plots of land provided with amenities and selling them to investors at the cost price of the said amenities. Ten million sq meters of land to build projects on were sold this way between 1 July 1993 and 1 September 1994 and another 10 million sq meters of land were sold for housing purposes. In line with the president's instructions, the government is considering a reduction in the price of land on which industrial projects will be built.

Judging by the experience of countries that have successfully and repeatedly increased the volume of their exports, it has become clear that the primary factor behind this success is the liberalization of their foreign trade. Egypt has taken earnest steps toward liberalizing its foreign trade. The government's future plans include provisions for reducing the highest tariff rate from 70 to 60 percent. Tariffs ranging from 40 to 60 percent will also be reduced by 10 percent. Customs duties on several investment commodities will also be reduced.

In the coming stage important steps will be taken to encourage exports. Backing will be provided for institutions which finance exports, credit will be made available, and a plan to publicize Egyptian goods in target markets abroad will be put into effect. Information about export opportunities will be made available. Trade agreements will be developed with the aim of obtaining relative benefits, particularly with the EU countries and the United States.

The government's plan also includes drawing up lists of currently idle production facilities in the various sectors and putting them into operation for the purpose of exportation. The government will lease these facilities at operational cost to local exporters or international export firms.

A study is under way to reduce taxes on exports and provide other financial incentives to exporters and producers whose products get the ISO-9000 international quality standard.

The government directs a lot of attention to service exports, particularly tourism, which is considered a job-creating industry and has a beneficial effect on various other economic activities. The government is backing the tourist industry by all available means, including allocating the necessary land for tourist installations and subsidizing the tourism encouragement budget.

During the days of its crisis, the government assisted the tourism sector by both direct and indirect means.

As regards human development, there is the conviction that the individual is the backbone for the development of people, if he is properly prepared through education, culture, and training, and given health care. In this sense, human development becomes an essential factor in propelling the wheel of economic and social growth. Since the beginning of the Third Five- Year Plan, the state has doubled its efforts to realize great progress in human development that fits in with Egypt's cultural and civilization history and contributes toward the future development of Egypt more than now.

In the field of education, there has been tangible improvement in the averages of registered students in all stages of pre-university education. The objective is to accept all children who are of compulsory school age in the first grade during the next year. The state has directed its efforts during the past two years toward expanding university and higher education by increasing 30,000 work opportunities each year, using the method of guided admission at universities [to certain faculties based on national need] which has just been introduced. In addition, general admission at universities will be increased. Currently, there are extensive efforts to decrease the levels of illiteracy by using three axes. The first is to increase the number of schools by 1,500 schools a year throughout the years of the Third Five-Year Plan, until each child finds a place at school for basic education. The second stage is to start implementing the project of 3,000 schools consisting of one term in the rural areas to combat female illiteracy. The third is to make use of university graduates to eradicate the illiteracy of citizens. The government adopts a clear program for qualitative selection of teachers and provision of specialized and educationally qualified teachers through schools of education. The government will expand implementation of training programs internally and externally. In the field of developing curricula, the elementary education curricula have been revised. Currently, the preparatory school and technical education curricula are being revised.

Also, the government has exerted and is exerting huge efforts to raise the standard of the general health conditions for citizens. All indications show that there is

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noticeable improvement in this level. During the period 1981-1993, the average male life expectancy increased by 13 years. This average was raised from 49.5 years to 62.5 years. The female average life expectancy increased by 14 years, from 51.9 years to 65.9 years. The mortality rate dropped from 70 to 38 per thousand for infants, from 10 to 4 per thousand for children from 1-5 years old, and from .8 per thousand to .4 per thousand among mothers. This improvement is due to the competent implementation of health care programs for children and mothers and increasing the averages of basic immunization coverage.

Numerous successful programs were implemented to combat bilharzia and respiratory diseases. Other programs have been implemented to bolster health services in the rural areas and to preserve the life of children, and bolster family planning.

Between 1981 and 1993 medical care services have greatly improved. The number of beds in the Health Ministry hospitals increased by 16.2 percent, in the health insurance hospitals by 88 percent, and in the Medical Establishment hospitals by 59 percent. Regarding medical care in the rural areas, the government is paying major attention to this sector, establishing new units to expand services to larger areas, replacing the rundown medical units, and promoting health units to village hospitals to provide better medical services. The government's main objective, particularly at the present stage and in the years to come, is to create real job opportunities to meet the society's needs. This requires us to double our efforts and increase our determination in various directions to develop the governorates and the rural areas and supply vital utilities to the desert areas and establish further free zones. To develop the governorates, 594 drinking water and sewage projects are under construction. Of these, 45 projects have already been implemented. Some 156 projects are expected to be implemented by June. The rest will be completed during the remaining years of the Third Five-Year Development Plan.

All major villages and their major outskirts and 76 percent of minor outskirts have been supplied with electricity. The target is to provide all these areas with electricity during the current development plan. Sixteen industrial zones have been established in the governorates and have been supplied with utilities and services so that they can cope with housing the largest number possible of plants to exploit the natural resources in every governorate and provide job opportunities for their youths. Study and planning are under way for other industrial zones in the Governorates of al- Fayyum, al-Buhayrah, Dumyat, al-Sharqiyah, and Asyut. Since 1990, the government began a project to spread artisan industries in the governorates to create 70,000 job opportunity in four years. The Social Development Fund is implementing six projects that will create approximately 500,000 job opportunity by the end of 1996, God willing.

The Egyptian rural areas are being developed and improved and job opportunities are being created there to stop the migration of youths. We are concentrating on economic activities that are linked to agriculture and bolstering the infra-structure of the rural areas. In fact, a program for rural development has been prepared to include all the villages of Egypt and to be carried out in stages. And in actual fact, 26 villages have been chosen from among the villages most deprived of services and which showed a high readiness for popular participation.

The government is also expanding in the new urban centers. It has set an integrated strategy to develop the Sinai, based on ideal exploitation of resources available there. This strategy takes into consideration local, regional, and international developments, as well as expected developments in the field of international trade. Investments to develop Sinai through a national program from 1994 to 2017, God willing, are estimated at around 75 billion pounds. The number of workers in Sinai is expected to reach 1 million by the completion of this project, God willing.

From another aspect, a standing committee has been formed to study and set a comprehensive plan to build up Upper Egypt, recommend that urban areas be built in it, and define the locations and areas where they are to be built. Preparations have been made to start a project on developing the northern part of the Gulf of Suez through cooperation with Japanese expertise. The objective is to define the best method for growth and the sectors on which there should be concentration in this area. The government encourages the citizens to invest and develop the new urban centers. The number of productive factories—all of which are private sector factories—in these urban centers was, as of 30 June 1994, 1,346 factories, all of which provided around 168,000 job opportunities. This number is expected to increase to 1,804 factories by the end of the Third Five-Year Plan to provide over 200,000 jobs. Currently, there are in Egypt five operational general free zone areas. The approval has been issued to set up another five new general free zones. The General Investment Authority is currently studying setting up more free zones in new strategic locations near the sea and air ports, with the objective of activating the Egyptian economy and creating new job opportunities.

[Indistinct question from audience]

[Sidqi] God willing next year, and the year after, and the year after. If we live, that is.

[Unidentified speaker] Next year meaning tomorrow.

[Sidqi] At least five next year. We will get you one close to where you are.

I now move to discuss the political aspects and the administrative and social reforms. You are aware that the state has opted for democracy as a course and method of ruling. Even when the outlaws misunderstood

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democracy and falsely used the cloak of religion to spread terrorism, anarchy, and violence, they were confronted with democratic means. To deepen the democratic practice, President Mubarak, as you are aware, called for convening a general congress for national dialogue to discuss the homeland's basic issues. This dialogue revealed that there is ample room for accord. The national dialogue congress worked out important recommendations aimed at broadening the base of political participation, allowing citizens to exercise their political rights in the best possible way. President Husni Mubarak indeed began to respond positively to these recommendations, which enjoyed general consensus. He issued a number of decrees that the esteemed People's Assembly approved to enhance the democratic march.

The government is pursuing firm policies to protect stability in the interest of the millions of people and their right to a safe and dignified life. The government records with utmost pride and appreciation the people's cooperation with the police in confronting the terrorist groups. On this occasion, I would like to extend sincere greetings to the policemen who [applause] have exerted and are exerting honest efforts to safeguard the security of the homeland and people. By the sacrifices of their martyrs, the police have succeeded in besieging this danger.

One of the pillars of stability is commitment to ensuring a rule of integrity and to exposing corruptors and the crooked officials, because corruption is one of the main obstacle to development, social justice, and political stability. Thanks to the reign of freedom and democracy, the state succeeded in uncovering numerous cases of corruption, hunted down the corruptors, and brought them to court. The government is launching continual campaigns to seize and destroy spoilt foodstuffs to protect consumers. Commodities of unknown sources or those that fail to meet certain specifications have been banned. Imported foodstuffs are under strict control. Samples of these foodstuffs are analyzed before permission is given for sale on the market. Sometimes, these foodstuffs are checked before they are shipped to Egypt. Your esteemed Assembly approved a law to repress trade fraud and to stiffen punishment of crooked merchants. Pursuing the same goals, the government will put forward to you during this session, God willing, a draft bill on prevention of monopoly because of its negative effects and detriment to the consumers' interests. Stability and democracy are backed by a fair judiciary that is keen to raise its services to high standards of competence. The government is making a comprehensive review of the basic legislation, particularly procedural, in order to facilitate processing of court cases and eliminate accumulation of lawsuits. The government is about to complete preparations for several draft laws, most importantly the trade law, amendment to certain provisions in the law of litigation, the criminal procedures law, the law and procedures of appeal before the Court of Cassation, the draft law of the state council, and the draft law of procedures on personal status.

There has been considerable progress in the media field, which was consolidated, modernized, and its audiovisual aspect expanded to clearly reach all the Egyptian territories, including remote areas. The Egyptian media entered the era of ultra high frequency to reach all surrounding areas of the world and hence emphasize Egypt's leading role in the Arab world, Africa, and the Islamic world. Egypt launched the Egyptian Space Channel, to be the first Arab satellite channel.

Two giant projects are expected to be completed in the next few years. They will help us and the Arab region to preserve our identity and culture. The first project is the media production city in the city of Sittah Uktubar, which will provide varied production that meets local and foreign demand. The second project is the Egyptian satellite, which will enable Egypt to enter the era of specialized satellite channels in the educational, cultural, news, and sports fields.

The government makes sincere efforts to develop culture by caring for talented and creative people in the various artistic and cultural spheres. The Public Book Authority releases new editions of our cultural heritage through cultural magazines, series, and translations. The government also makes great strides in developing all cultural centers in Egypt and disseminating cultural works in all its regions.

In the social field, the family planning activity in Egypt provides a successful model. This is due basically to the full coordination between concerned ministries and apparatuses and the establishment of regional family planning councils in the governorates. There has been a remarkable improvement in the population growth rates, 2.1 percent in 1994. Ten governorates managed to achieve a rate below 2 percent. In light of the outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development, the role of nongovernmental organizations in the population and family planning programs will be enhanced.

In the field of housing, some 2.2 million housing units were built during 1981-1994, 63 percent of these are low-cost housing units, 24 percent average units, 9 percent above average units, and 4 percent are deluxe units. The government is currently studying the law that organizes building and construction activity, with the goal of alleviating the burden on investors and preserving the laws that govern construction activity. The law on cooperative housing is being reviewed to increase cooperatives' share in house-building. The government takes interest in the law that organizes the relationship between the owners and tenants of housing units. The first section of the law, concerning the new housing units, will be referred to your venerable council soon, God willing.

In the field of public utilities, potable water production was increased from 6.5 million cubic meters per day in 1982 to 11.7 million cubic meters in 1994. The capacity

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of the sanitary drainage system was increased from 2.2 million cubic meters in 1982 to 5.7 in 1994.

This is in addition to the primary task given by the new urban communities authority to the private sector to contribute to developing new cities and solving the housing problem by providing land plots with utilities for investment in housing by individuals, associations, and companies. Each plot is 400-to-600 square meters in area. This measure prompted strong demand by the people who rushed to reserve these plots, especially in al-Shuruq and al-'Ubur cities and the Fifth Urban Community.

The new cities witnessed a noticeable increase in the efforts to establish utilities and this greatly contributed to solving the problem of unmarketed housing units and attracted investors and land beneficiaries to the new cities.

The state takes care of those with limited income. One of its most important means of achieving this goal is by developing slum areas; 434 such areas in 11 governorates have been selected for this purpose. Scores of projects involving electricity, roads, drinking water, sewage, hygiene, health services, gardens, tree-planting, and other tasks in these areas have been completed. The investments required for the basic infrastructure projects for water, sewage, electricity, and roads in these areas over the next three years have been estimated at about 3.4 billion pounds.

On the other hand, the state's general budget for the year 1994- 95 included credits estimated at 3.902 billion pounds, representing the state's direct contribution to procuring the essential foodstuffs and medicine and public services at prices compatible with the ability of those with limited income.

The state also provided insurance against old age, disability, and death for some 15.9 million people. The insurance plan is designed to expand to cover 16.4 million in 1994-95. The pensions and compensations disbursed in the year 1993-94 amounted to approximately 5.4 billion pounds and the number of pensioners reached 6.7 million. The number eligible for rehabilitation services in the year 1993-94 totaled about 100,000 citizens, who have been provided with various necessary services.

In line with the Government's policy of taking care of the limited-income people in its handling of the economic reform burdens and the accompanying price hikes, the Government has since July 1987 disbursed an annual social allowance for employees in addition to the regular established allowance. In addition, the provisions of Law No. 187 of 1993 doubled the exemptions permitted for family burdens.

With the liberalization of the prices of agricultural products and cotton as of the 1994-95 season, the state for a transitional period is implementing a cooperative system of marketing. Out of its desire to alleviate the effects of this liberalization on the cost of combating cotton diseases during the aforementioned transitional period, the Government is currently examining its share of these costs. The Government will announce the results of this study next month, God willing.

The Government is interested in the restoration of meals for school students since it realizes this measure's importance and its impact on their physical and mental conditions. The Government has provided them with nutritious fast meals rich in iron, oil, and [word indistinct]. Some 3.5 million students have benefited from this service. The Government is also studying a draft bill to reorganize and expand the law concerning those eligible for health insurance.

As for administrative reform, it is known that upgrading requires administrative development to cope with the economic, social, and political changes. Proceeding from this point, a five-year plan was implemented to upgrade the government administration during 1987-92. Continuing these efforts and in light of the evaluation of that plan's results, another five-year plan was devised to cover the period from 92-97.

Many considerations were taken into account in that plan, most importantly that the development should cover all elements of the administration process and that its implementation should be gradual, along with the completion of programs to streamline procedures in dealing with the public and investors. This is in addition to developing work sites and rationalizing and organizing the utilization of manpower in the governmental sector and paying attention to automated data systems.

Concerning the flood disaster, the Government already provided the esteemed Assembly with a detailed statement on 19 November 1994 on that disaster. I believe this statement will be discussed by your esteemed Assembly in the next few days. On this occasion the Government reiterates its thanks and appreciation for everyone who contributed to alleviating the victims' suffering, foremost of whom are our armed forces [applause] of which Egypt is rightfully proud. Egypt also has the right to be proud of the armed forces' capabilities to handle any dangers threatening the nation. Greetings to all personnel of the armed forces.

Finally I turn to Egypt's foreign policy. It is well-known that the main pillars of Egyptian foreign policy are based on several foundations. First, regarding the peace process in the Middle East, Egypt is continuing its constructive efforts to establish a comprehensive peace in the region in accordance with the principles on which the Madrid Conference was convened to achieve Israeli withdrawal from the territories in 1967 and determine the future of the fraternal Palestinian people. Peace requires a military balance in the Middle East, removing weapons of mass destruction from the region, and reaching agreement on arrangements to limit arms. In the post-peace era, all peoples of the region must benefit

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from an economic development that does not contravene the existing Arab economic system.

Regarding the Arab countries, Arab interests and restoring solidarity among the Arab countries occupy first priority in Egypt's foreign policy. On the bilateral level, Egypt is acting to strengthen its relations with all Arab countries, making use of the accumulated assets of ties with the Arab brothers. Egypt has special relations of cooperation with the Arab Gulf countries and is linked with these countries along with Syria by the Damascus Declaration which we seek to preserve and strengthen. Egypt emphasizes the need to maintain Iraqi security and territorial integrity but realizes that ending the Iraqi people's hardships and facilitating their return to a normal life hinge on implementation of UN resolutions. Egypt welcomes Iraq's recognition of Kuwaiti sovereignty and its international borders.

Ties are steadily growing and strengthening with Syria. Through the Higher Egyptian-Syrian Committee, numerous achievements on various spheres of cooperation have been realized. Egypt supports Syria and its legitimate right to restore all its occupied territories. Egypt is acting to consolidate its ties with the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] politically, economically, and culturally to achieve their common interests. Egypt participated in the AMU foreign ministers meeting held in Algiers in November to emphasize the importance of these relations.

Egypt's relations with Sudan are governed by immutable historical, geographical, and cultural facts that form a necessary bond between the two nations of the northern and southern Nile Valleys. Egypt consistently opposes any attempt to partition Sudan and gives strong backing to this stance at international forums.

Recently Egypt made positive contributions to the efforts seeking to stem the deteriorating situation in Somalia and end that country's conflict.

During President Mubarak's chairmanship of the OAU in 1993-1994, Africa achieved several achievements, notably the establishment of a mechanism to forestall, manage, and resolve disputes among OAU member states. This has been one of the most important achievements since the OAU was founded in 1963. Egypt has proposed holding an extraordinary session of the OAU Ministerial Council to discuss ways of achieving African economic growth. It will play host to this meeting in April 1995.

Furthermore, Egypt seeks to emphasize the Islamic dimension in its foreign policy, doing this through the Islamic Conference Organization and by participating in its various activities. Egypt is also cooperating bilaterally with various Islamic countries to improve the conditions of Muslims everywhere. It attended Casablanca's Islamic summit last month, at which it played a prominent role.

Egypt also seeks to bolster its ties with Europe in various spheres. Ever since the EU became an economic and political unit, Egypt has been seeking to transform its relations with it from being ties of trade and economic cooperation into relations based on equal participation in all political, economic, cultural, scientific, and social domains.

Egypt has also shown great interest in promoting ties with the various Eastern European countries, except Federal Yugoslavia, that is Serbia and Montenegro, because of its well-known stance on the issue of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Egypt also seeks to strengthen and develop its cooperation with the 12 CIS republics. Egypt has sent many of its experts to those countries to transfer Egyptian expertise to them.

In addition to the distinctive role played by the Egyptian troops deployed with the UN Protection Force in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Egypt has continued its active and pioneer efforts at all international forums and conferences to back the legitimate rights of the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Recently it decided to open an embassy there.

Regarding our relations with the United States and Canada, Egyptian-U.S. ties have continued to grow and develop. There has been an active exchange of visits and meetings between the two countries' highest-level officials with the aim of boosting their cooperation in the political, economic, military, and technical fields, all this being based on mutual respect and trust.

President Clinton's visit to Egypt on 26 October 1994 crowned these relations. Egypt and the United States are currently negotiating methods of boosting economic ties and encouraging cooperation between the private sector in each country in view of the fact that the private sector is the prime mover of economic growth in Egypt.

Egypt also shows growing interest in strengthening political and economic ties with all Asian countries and seeks to benefit by their successful economic models especially because of the Asian countries' growing economic importance in world industrial output and trade. The president's visit to China in April 1994 contributed to the growth of political and economic ties between Egypt and China.

Finally I wish to add that our foreign policy concerns involve unlimited interest in the well-being of Egyptians living abroad.

Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen, members: President Husni Mubarak's speech at the opening of this parliamentary session stressed that it is high time we gradually enjoyed the benefits of economic reform, as we have all suffered from its inevitable burdens. It pleases me to assure you that the time has come to pluck the fruits, particularly in the field of government spending on human development, expanding public utilities to deprived areas, and expanding the bases of commodity production to provide new job opportunities.

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Government spending on education represents 18 percent of current expenditure in the 1994-95 budget compared to 12.6 percent in 1990- 91. The rate of government spending on health services rose from 3.4 percent to 4.5 percent during the same period. The state is now building 1,500 schools per year, whereas before it built a mere 100 schools per year in the best of cases.

Health care for children and mothers has been developed remarkably. Health services have started to improve.

The government is currently carrying out an ambitious plan to improve the potable water and sanitary drainage services and to extend them to deprived areas, particularly in rural areas. A total of 594 projects costing 11.4 billion pounds are currently being carried out in the governorates. With the completion of these projects, by the end of the Third Five-Year Plan, a person's share of potable water in rural areas will be double what was added to that share in the past 10 years. Per capita sanitary drainage services will increase by four times the total increase for the past 10 years. The Greater Cairo sanitary drainage project is being carried out on the east and west banks of the Nile and Hulwan. Once the first phase of the project is completed in 1997 at a cost of 7.5 billion pounds, it will extend the sanitary drainage services to the deprived areas in Greater Cairo.

The proportion of the population benefiting from electrification has risen to about 95 percent. There are plans to reach 100 percent in the next few years.

As I have stated, the Egyptian economy has started showing appropriate returns on the huge investments in the infrastructure services sector and from the expansion of the production capacity of the industrial and agricultural sectors, which are the sectors most capable of strengthening the production capacity of the Egyptian economy with the aim of increasing economic growth and creating real job opportunities for the youth.

The area of land that has been cultivated since 1987 plus the land that will be reclaimed by the middle of 1995 is expected to reach 880,000 feddans. Industrial growth is currently spreading in all parts of Egypt. Scores of industrial zones and small industrial and handicraft industries are being built in the governorates, in the new towns, and the desert areas. Programs have been prepared for special projects to create new job opportunities in the industrial, mining, agriculture, tourism, and services sectors in Sinai, in the north of the Gulf of Suez, in the new towns, in the industrial zones on the northern coast, and in new urban areas in Upper Egypt.

An annual real growth rate of 4.7 percent has been achieved in the past 12 years. Investments in the 1994-95 plan amount to 35 billion pounds, including 12.8 billion pounds for the government and the economic establishments, 4 billion pounds for the public business sector, and 18.2 billion pounds for the private sector. This represents 52 percent of total investments. It also represents 21 percent of the estimated gross domestic product at market price. This plan aims to increase gross domestic product from 139 billion pounds to 145 billion pounds, representing a growth rate of 4.5 percent over last year. The plan also aims to continue to improve living standards by increasing the growth rate of total consumption to double the growth rate of the population and to provide new job opportunities for 500,000 workers.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, members of the distinguished Assembly, I hope that 1995 will usher in a new phase full of a spirit of optimism to realize the hopes of our great people. In response to President Muhammad Husni Mubarak's call for doubling the national income every 10 years, the government will strive to increase the scope of investments in the coming period to a level that will achieve an annual growth rate equal to three times the population growth rate.

I conclude this statement by expressing my deep gratitude and appreciation to your distinguished Assembly for its continuing cooperation with the government and for its effective participation in drafting economic and social reform programs. We are confident that this cooperation will continue in this session, God willing.

May God grant us success and enable us to serve Egypt. He is the best helper and supporter. May God's peace and mercy be with you. [applause]

Reportage on Reaction to Alexandria Summit

Daily on Summit, Steps Taken

NC0301092195 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0650 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 3 Jan (MENA)—The newspaper AL-AHRAM affirms that the recent Alexandria summit attended by President Husni Mubarak, King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad clearly shows the three leaders' perception of the changes in the Middle East and the dangers inherent in the continuing differences in the Arab world since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

In its editorial today, the paper notes that the Alexandria summit represents a link in the joint Arab action process. The paper calls for adopting additional measures to activate joint Arab action, which is the ultimate fortress for safeguarding the vital interests of all Arab countries.

AL-AHRAM adds that the most significant step is to close the Iraqi file and convince that country's leadership to comply with the remaining UN Security Council resolutions so international and regional sides will not have the opportunity to continue their punishment of the Iraqi people and impose sanctions on them. The paper calls for halting the hasty normalization of relations with Israel and for making this normalization contingent upon a final settlement, namely Israel's withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories.

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The newspaper emphasizes that the importance of joint Arab action in serving the interests of all Arab countries makes it important to achieve reconciliation and to revive the Arab League's power, instead of pushing it toward slow death through groupings and blocs that are bound to dismember Arab action and motivate competition at the expense of the interests of all Arab countries.

Summit Seen as 'Encouraging'

MM0301125195 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 31 Dec 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by Ashraf al-Faqiyy and Hamad al-Jasir: "Cairo Talking of Comprehensive Summit"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] An Egyptian diplomatic source has told AL-HAYAH that the results of the Alexandria summit "will be an encouraging factor for holding a comprehensive Arab summit." On the date of that summit he said: "Calm contacts must be made first, then an agenda should be prepared for the summit—an agenda with the object of Arab consensus, since that would lead to the success of the summit's proceedings, if held." [passage omitted]

Roles, Nature of Summit

NC0301215395 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 2 Jan 95 pp 1, 3

[Article by Chief Editor Mahfuz al-Ansari: "The Alexandria Summit...Why? It Is Neither an Axis, Nor a Bloc for Solidarity and Peace Against Hegemony"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The unexpected tripartite summit in Alexandria between Mubarak, Fahd, and al-Asad, raised a number of questions inside Egypt itself and outside it in the Arab world, regionally, and internationally.

One of the most important queries, or question marks that are looking for an answer is:

Are the three Alexandria partners members of a new grouping, an axis, or a bloc that is being formed, established, and declared through this unexpected appearance on the stage at the biggest Egyptian seaport?

Or is the Alexandria summit an expression of the rejection, an honest demonstration at the highest level of a rejection of the Arab reality with all its hostilities, fragmentation, and weakness?

Is it a call, in word and deed, by three leaders and three capitals that have great importance and status, urging the people in our Arab world—the leaders, upper classes, institutions, and individuals—to wake up and be alert and confront the challenges at the required level, with the necessary seriousness, using creative thinking and competent, glorious hands?

One of the question marks that are both confusing and inspiring revolves round the relationship between two surprises.

The first is the surprise announcement regarding Egypt's determination to join the Arab Maghreb union as an observer, without any introduction or forewarning.

The second surprise which people woke up to on Wednesday [28 December] morning was the news on the radio of the arrival in Alexandria of al-Asad first, followed by the custodian of the two holy mosques.

If the intention, as some imagined, was to turn our backs on the Arab east and direct our vision strongly toward the Arab Maghreb in an attempt to head north through the Mediterranean Sea and then the European Union, if this is the case as some conjectured, why have we done a complete 180 degree turn on the compass toward the east?

There remains my question: Is the reason despair over the peace process, denial of it and an attempt to distance oneself from it, after intentions became clear, whether good or bad, after motives and ambitions were bared, and after some terrified or malicious people were attracted by the new master and went racing up to him begging him for security, beseeching him for his wisdom, asking for knowledge from his centers, and pretending to have the illusory ability to manage funds, resources, energy, trade, and economy?

I would first like to note, nay confirm, that the meeting of the three leaders—Mubarak, Fahd, and al-Asad—in Alexandria does not in any way indicate or announce the establishment of a new axis or bloc in the heart of the Arab world, in the heart of the Middle East region, or the heart of the Islamic world.

I would first like to point out, nay again confirm, that the unexpected Alexandria summit, which was announced unexpectedly and which convened on Egyptian territory, is a new factor for uniting and gathering the people of the region, through their national identity, culture, civilization, and joint future.

We assert once again that the Alexandria minisummit is the nucleus; it is the magnetic pole, the brilliant center of light that chases away the desperation and frustration which almost throttled the people of the region and planted fear and hopelessness in their hearts.

This nucleus, by the nature of the sides taking part in it, their roles, and their geography, is attractive. With regard to the role, we pause first with Syria, the throbbing heart of the Arab nation. We pause with Syria, the state of frontiers and joint borders, non-Arab nationalities, or hostile nationalities with designs.

We pause with Syria with its capital Damascus, the capital of the Umayyads, the capital of the imperial conquests. By these factors alone, as well as others, it

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cannot but be an element of Arab and regional reconciliation, solidarity, unity, and closing of ranks.

Again regarding roles, we move to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to Riyadh, this island or peninsula, where the revelation descended.

It is the land of the honorable Ka'bah, the tomb of the Prophet from where the message emerged, to which a billion people perform their pilgrimage and in whose direction they turn their faces during prayer. With this nature and this role in mind, it cannot but be for those already united and uniting others, those who agree over one word and who direct their faces to one qiblah, who circle a single symbol—the old house or the Ka'bah.

Egypt also plays a role because it is the central and uniting factor. It is the one holding out until Doomsday to protect and defend Arabism and Islam with its people, ideology, honorable al-Azhar institution, and its institutions of unity—the house of Arabs [Arab League]. The Arab League hails from Egypt, and from its territory it will start the journey of revival, reform, and revitalization at a dangerous moment in which the sickles of destruction have united forces to destroy Egypt and annihilate Arabism.

We move on from the roles of the three countries to the geographic nature of the three partners in the Alexandria summit.

Egypt is situated at the edge of the western Arab world, and from there we move on west to the shores of the Atlantic at the Moroccan capital, Rabat. After that, we have Mauritania.

In the east or northeast of the Arab world resides Damascus, the capital of the ancient al-Sham countries, extending its arms outwards, interwoven and interlinked with Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq.

On the Arabian Peninsula, Saudi Arabia occupies the area of a continent, at the heart of which sits the capital Riyadh. Its land extends from the Red Sea in the west in a long trip across the desert east across the whole peninsula to the shores of the Gulf. These wide and expansive borders link the heart of the peninsula with the heart of the Arab world and the east, the Gulf countries, Iraq, Yemen, and Jordan.

In other words, the natures of the roles and geography of the three countries reflect the objectives of the Alexandria summit and its course.

From the preceding explanation, the suggestion that there is an apparent contradiction between Egypt's request to join the Arab Maghreb Union as an observer, and its call for the minisummit in Alexandria, is demolished.

The first move was to restore Arab unity and solidarity by attracting the countries of the west to the causes of the Arabs in the east through this link in the chain, Egypt.

The second move complements or finalizes the objectives of the first step, so that everyone moves in the direction of the congregation point, the point of cooperation, solidarity, and confrontation of all projects, maneuvers, conspiracies, or formulations that attempt to control the region and its countries, not as a group, but on an individual basis—that is, each country separately.

Here, we get to the next question mark. This question mark wonders whether this new Arab action, through its uniting and resisting nuclei which control and organize the speed of movement in the region and area, is a reaction to peace, the peace process, its projects, and various tracks. We wonder whether this was a rejection and retraction to what has so far been accomplished and achieved.

We ask whether the Alexandria summit is a plus that supports and backs peace and its efforts, and attempts to resolve its problems.

The answer is that the Alexandria summit and the coming Arab action on various levels and on a wide scale are certainly a strong support for peace and its efforts, on condition that it is a just peace. This peace should be based on good intentions, which themselves are based on respect for international resolutions and faithful implementation and execution of the agreements, pledges, and treaties.

This is also based on one condition: that the desire for regional cooperation is based on the principle of equality and fairness of treatment. Actions and moves should reflect the democratic element of relations. They should be far removed from designs to impose hegemony, control, or exploit.

Proceeding from the logic of this understanding of peace and regional cooperation, and as a result of the bad intentions, ulterior motives, and pitfalls dug by Israel and other parties, to prey on the region and tear it apart, gobble it up, and create violence and turbulence in order to push their plans, the Alexandria summit met, the summit of the nuclei that restore confidence, unite the fragments, and proceed toward peace, cooperation, unity, stability, and growth.

While appreciating the great importance of the Arab and regional motives which prompted the three leaders—Mubarak, King Fahd, and al-Asad—to meet and coordinate stands, discuss, and call for greater solidarity; nevertheless, international and world motives were not absent from the minds, thinking, or accounts of the three leaders, particularly since not only the residents of the region, but others in all parts of the world take us into consideration when they make their plans.

They take us into consideration because we are "unique"; we have our religion, Islam; we have the same national affiliation, pan-Arabism; we live in the same interrelated region; and we have one lineage, one culture, one civilization, and one configuration.

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The others—the politicians and philosophers of the super and major powers, both present powers and powers to be—talk about the coming multipolar century. In their view, it is different from the previous one, the 20th century, and similar to the 19th.

They talk about "the conflict of civilizations" as a characteristic feature of the new era. To them, this conflict focuses on "three doctrines" or "three philosophies": The Buddhist Confucianism of Asia's major and minor powers; the Christianity of the Christian American west; and "Islam", the religion of over 1 billion distributed in varying density, power, and volume over the continents, particularly Asia and Africa.

The center of this creed of Islam is us; we have the proof. The center of attraction and the focal source of radiation spring from the heart in which our land lies and our people dwell.

Hence, the leaders who met in Alexandria and those who prepare for bigger meetings later on cannot ignore the international dimension. But the others base their calculations on us, on the reality in which they are acting and the future they want to rule or commandeer.

The Western politicians and philosophers of global change have reached the conclusion that it is hard to run the globe in the new world. The reason for that is the different reactions by the active "keys" and powers of the new order toward any event of a global nature. To them, the difference is due to the diversity of cultures, creeds, and races that will make up and build the new poles or superpowers.

Although multipolarity existed in 19th century-England, France, Germany, Russia, Austria, and Hungary—all came from one region, Europe; followed one creed, Christianity; and belonged to the same culture and civilization, the civilization formed by the Renaissance, with all its arts, sciences, and applications.

At the time, calculations were easy, reactions were expected, and the course and limits of agreement or disagreement were predictable.

The diversity of civilizations makes things harder. In light of this last fact, I can say that the confusion characterizing dealings with the region, particularly the Arab region with its states and people, and the disrespect, rudeness, and lack of interest in its people's hopes, aspirations, ambitions, feelings, and thinking can be traced back basically to the ignorance of the feelings and sentiments stored in the heart, soul, and mind. They can be traced back to miscalculations and to judgement by appearance alone.

This, in my view, is a fatal figment of the imagination. The cultural heritage of this region will eventually come back stronger than ever, even if it were deeply buried under rust, if it lost its luster and glitter in the course of time, or if its essence was obscured by ordeals.

This might be the motive behind this barbaric assault. The problem might be the lack of knowledge about the reality of the region, its people, powers, and its visible and potential capabilities. But then, it might not be a problem of ignorance or misjudgment.

The Alexandria meeting will remain the sound starting point that eliminates despair, sows hope, and revives the region's aspiration to change reality. It is a starting point that is aware of the timing, goal, and rhythm of movement.

Citizens Arrested for Demonstrating for Detainee

NC0201221595 Paris AFP in English 1611 GMT 2 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Jan 2 (AFP)—Egyptian security forces have arrested 28 members of a pro-fundamentalist party for demonstrating in support of one of their leaders, 'Adil Husayn, detained on charges of spreading militant Islamic ideas.

The Labour Party said Monday that 15 of its leaders were arrested in Kafr al-Dawwar, an industrial city in the Nile Delta. They were accused of distributing posters expressing solidarity with 'Adil Husayn.

Thirteen other members of the party were arrested in 'Ayn Shams, a northern suburb of Cairo, following the detention of 'Adil Husayn last month.

Husayn, 67, was accused of bringing leaflets published by the outlawed al-Jama'ah Islamiyah [Islamic Group] militant group into Egypt after a trip to Europe in October. He has denied the charge.

On December 25, the writer and secretary general of the Labour Party was ordered held for 15 days.

Islamic militants have been waging a violent anti-government campaign since March 1992 which has claimed 567 lives, including eight policemen and three civilians gunned down Monday in the troubled al-Minya province of southern Egypt.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Expresses Concern Over Chechnya

LD2712203994 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 27 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] During a meeting with the ambassador of the Russian Federation to the Great Jamahiriyah, the leader of the revolution on behalf of the Islamic world and the Islamic people's command, expressed concern over what is happening in Chechnya within the framework of the concern felt by the rest of the Muslims such as the Tartars and the Caucasians over what the Muslims in Chechnya are being subjected to.

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The leader also expressed in his message to the Russian leadership concern for Russia's interest and its integrity, warning that the raiding and the killing of Muslims in Chechnya might lead to a collapse of the relations existing between Russia and the Islamic world. He also reaffirmed the willingness of the Great Jamahiriyah and the universal Islamic people's command to take any action likely to prevent any disaster between the two sides.

Al-Qadhdhafi Meets With al-Niqat al-Khams Leaders

LD3112143094 Tripoli JANA in English 1420 GMT 31 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli, 31 Dec, JANA—Reaffirming adherence to the principles and objectives of the great Al-Fatih revolution, declaring defiance and readiness for confrontation and that thanks to the revolution and leader it is possible to confront the enemies and build the future on the Libyan Arab land and in entrenchment of eternal cohesion between the masses and their leader, the leader of the revolution met with the popular leadership for the area of Al-Niqat al-Khams.

The popular leadership welcomed the leader with chants reasserting the sovereignty of the Libyan Arab people over its land and thanks to its free and firm will and relentless endeavours it will defeat the enemies and protect the future of the Arab nation.

Also the popular leadership stressed that they are stronger than the embargo and that they will not give in to the policies of threat and terror, they will confront the enemies [words indistinct] were seeking any excuse to undermine and destroy the Arab nation and focusing their hatered on the great Jamahiryah, the free and overwhelming voice of this glorious nation.

The leader of the revolution addressed the popular leadership in the area of Al-Niqat al-Khams highlighting their tasks and responsibilities in mobilising the masses to confront the enemies of the nation and entrenching the people's authority, the power of all people and realising progress on the Libyan Arab land.

The popular leadership made a speech reiterating their loyalty to the leader. They stressed that in meeting the maker of their victories, they will enhance their pride and dignity and that they will be further determined in confronting the enemies and entrenching the people's power.

The popular leadership at Al-Niqat al-Khams presented to the leader of the revolution bouquets of flowers expressing their gratitude and pride in the maker of their victories. Also they presented to the leader a copy of the holy Koran in reafirmation of their loyalty to the maker of the masses' epoch and that thanks to the leader they will continue the process of defiance and readiness for confrontation in defence of land and dignity.

Experts of the area presented under the auspicies of the popular leadership, the studies and research prepared for the realisation of progress and harnessing all available resources or the achieving progress in the area of Al-Niqat al-Khams.

Al-Qadhdhafi on Arabs 'Giving Away Their Countries'

LD3112143694 Tripoli JANA in English 1425 GMT 31 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli, 31 Dec, JANA—The leader of the revolution made the following statement to JANA: 'If the outgoing year saw the Arabs giving away their countries and themselves to the enemy, next year we expect them to give away their wives and daughters for this is not strange for Arab rulers.'

Rush To Normalize Ties With Israel Condemned

LD0201123195 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1110 GMT 2 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Tripoli, 2 Jan—The Great Jamahiriyah has conveyed to the Arab League its indignation, strong condemnation, and rejection of the unjustified rush by some Arab States in the direction of the Israeli enemy. The Great Jamahiriyah has stressed the need to halt this rush, which is a disregard for and a squandering of the historical Arab rights. It also called for practical and urgent measures to be taken to stop this ridiculous situation.

This was explained during a meeting between the brother permanent delegate of the Great Jamahiriyah to the Arab League, with Arab League Secretary General 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid.

The permanent delegate of the Great Jamahiriyah, following this meeting, stressed the need for a decisive Arab stand against the Arab sides that disregard the higher interests of the Arab nation, squander its rights, and prefer keeping silent about the ridiculous normalization and surrender to the plans of the Israeli enemy. He said he explained to the Arab League secretary general the serious threat of the weapons of mass destruction possessed by the Israeli enemy to the heart of pan-Arab security. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Hijackers Release Passengers, Crew

AB0401103295 Paris AFP in English 1017 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Khartoum, Jan 4 (AFP)—A man and woman who hijacked a Sudanese plane with 36 people on board Wednesday [4 January] freed all passengers and crew after the plane landed, aviation authorities said.

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The two hijackers who were demanding to fly to Egypt remained alone inside the plane while negotiations continued with government officials at Port Sudan airport, the Sudanese News Agency said. The agency did not say how the hijackers were armed.

The plane had just taken off from Khartoum on a regular flight to the northern town of Merawi when a man and woman on board ordered the captain to go to Cairo. He convinced them the plane did not have enough fuel and the aircraft landed in Port Sudan, on the Red Sea coast of eastern Sudan.

An Egyptian court on Sunday sentenced a Sudanese to 15 years of hard labour for hijacking a Sudan Airways plane with 93 passengers flying from Khartoum to Dongola in northern Sudan on April 6.

Adel Mahjub, 26, had forced the pilot at gunpoint to fly to Egypt, where the authorities refused permission to land in Cairo but allowed the aircraft to touch down in the southern town of Luxor. The hijacker gave himself up there.

Mahjub said the political and economic situation in Sudan drove him to hijack the plane. Egypt authorities turned down his request for political asylum as well as an extradition request from Sudan.

Relations between the two countries have been strained since General Omar el-Beshir seized power in a military coup in Khartoum in 1989, to form a junta backed by Islamic fundamentalists.

Khartoum and Cairo trade accusations of harbouring each other's opposition groups.

Al-Bashir on Destruction of Training Academy

EA2912182394 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 28 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The president of the Republic, Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, has praised the pioneers who brought independence to the homeland. Addressing media leaders today, he said it was the strength and intelligence of these men that led the country to independence with minimal losses at a time when many countries were suffering under colonialism. [passage omitted]

During his meeting with the media, leaders, his excellency the president deplored the regrettable episode which recently occurred at the Sudanese Academy of Communications Studies and Media Training, which he said had been designed to bring about its destruction. He added that this was something which would necessitate a review of the methods used to secure vital installations. He called for the academy to be rebuilt by way of a national campaign to be conducted in all the states.

Al-Bashir: Force To Train 1 Million Recruits

EA0101192095 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 1 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Lieutenant-General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, the president of the republic, has said that real independence lies in adherence to the cultural course and rejection of humiliating subordination to others. His excellency reviewed the history of the militants and the makers of independence, saluting all those who fought for Sudan's independence of Sudan, led by Al-Imam al-Mahdi and the late patriotic leader, Isma'il al-Azhari. That is what he said this morning when addressing a rally at (Salala) Martyrs' Square in Port Sudan marking the 39th anniversary of Sudan's independence.

His excellency called on the citizens to join the popular defense training camps, which this year would witness the training of over one million recruits to defend the country against the machinations of the enemies lying in wait to detract from the its unity and severeignty. He said: We must preserve our independence with our lives and pursue the course of independence as a continuing process.

His excellency stressed the need to maintain [words indistinct] to face up to the challenges of internal construction. He said true independence lay in preserving and defending sudan and its territorial integrity. Sudan's unity should be supported by promoting educational services, combating ignorance, eradicating illiteracy and distributing balanced development.

He said the national salvation revolution had come to raise Sudan's flag above all other flags. He said: The words There Is No God But Allah constitute the flag that must be protected throughout the centuries. We should offer ourselves as martyrs for its sake.

Lt-Gen Al-Bashir said: We will never abandon the course we have taken towards God, regardless of the extent to which the enemies engage in dogfights over us.

His Excellency saluted Lt-Gen 'Ali Abdallah Salih, the Yemeni president, who destroyed the fortresses of the agents of division and disunity and achieved Yemeni unity. Lt-Gen Al-Bashir also welcomed Mr 'Abd al-Majid (al-Qa'ud), the secretary of the general people's committee of the Libyan Jamahiriyah. His excellency saluted the Libyan leadership and people who had stood firm in defense of Arab unity for over 20 years and endured the unfair blockade against Libya. His excellency also saluted Iraqi President Saddam Husayn and the Iraqi people who stood against oppression and aggression and against the blockade imposed on them.

The rally held this morning at (Salala) Martyrs' Square in Port Sudan was also addressed by the country's guest, Lt-Gen 'Ali Abdallah Salih, the president of the Yemeni Arab [as heard] republic. He expressed pleasure to be attending the country's independence anniversary celebrations and appreciation to the Sudanese people for their hospitality. The president of Yemen praised the Sudanese people's support for the Yemeni people in entrenching the pillars of unity. [passage omitted]

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Official Calls For Lifting of Embargo Against Iraq

EA0301192295 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The first undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry, Ambassador 'Umar Yusuf Baridu, has called for the lifting of the embargo imposed on Iraq. In addition to the appeal, he also discussed a recent visit by an Iraqi delegation led by Iraqi National Assembly Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih, and said that the visit was a manifestation of the solid relations existing between Khartoum and Baghdad.

His excellency the ambassador also stressed the need for reconciliation in the Arab world and the need to realize Arab solidarity.

On Sudanese-Eritrean relations, his excellency announced that both sides had recently discussed, in Sanaa, aspects of the disagreements between them, and had agreed to continue their meetings to reach a solution acceptable to both sides.

On Sudanese-Egyptian relations, his excellency stressed the government's eagerness to have solid brotherly relations with the government in Cairo, and called on the Egyptian authorities to increase the political will necessary to achieve this goal.

Southern Resistance Splits, Forms New Group

AB3012093594 Paris AFP in English 1201 GMT 29 Dec 94

[By Hugh Nevill]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nairobi, Dec 29 (AFP)—Dissidents of a splinter movement of southern Sudan's armed resistance forces on Thursday [29 December] announced the formation of a new rebel grouping under an old name. The split in the resistance movement in the largely Christian and animist south, which is fighting for an end to domination by the Islamic, Arabised north, has resulted in a drying up of materiel from sympathisers.

Khartoum government troops were meanwhile preparing for their traditional three-month dry season offensive from January, officials of the new formation acknowledged.

"We can only get supplies if we are united," spokesman Juma Thomas told a press conference in Nairobi. "If we are divided, people get fed up—that is compelling us not to get any assistance. We are going to face a lot of obstacles."

The main southern fighting force, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement and Army (SPLM/A) led by Colonel John Garang, was formed in 1983.

In 1991, dissidents formed the Sudan People's Liberation Movement and Army United (SPLM/A-United), but its leader, Commander Riak Machar, announced last September that it was dropping demands for greater autonomy in southern Sudan in favour of full independence, and changed the movement's name to the South Sudan Independence Movement and Army (SSIM/A).

On Thursday, however, dissidents announced that a meeting on December 22 had decided to continue the SPLM/A-United under the leadership of Commander Lam Akol as chairman and commander in chief, with Commander Arok Thon Arok as first vice chairman and Commander Peter Sule as vice chairman.

Thon Arok, who had resigned from the old SPLM/A-United in May, told Thursday's press conference that Riak, whom he accused of "dictatorial" handling of affairs, had forfeited leadership of the SPLM/A-United by forming the SSIM/A. "His claim that he has dissolved the SPLM/A-United is a bad joke," he said. "He has no right to do so as the SPLM/A-United is a people's history and legacy from which Riak has only the right to defect as he did."

Lam was one of the original founders and foreign affairs spokesman—number six in the hierarchy—of the old SPLM/A-United under Riak, but was fired from that position earlier this year. He disappeared from view among his own supporters in the south, reemerging in November. A former university lecturer, he remained in Khartoum from the founding of the SPLM/A-United in 1983 to 1986 "for tactical reasons," Commander Thomas said.

The new grouping's manifesto includes self-determination for south Sudan and reconciliation of the factions.

Thon Arak said it could rejoin the mainstream SPLM/A, but not under Garang's leadership.

Government forces overran many of the opposition's positions in the south during offensives earlier this year. They are estimated to be capable of applying overwhelming force during the coming months.

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Bahrain

Amir Receives British Armed Forces Official

JN0401102395 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0710 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Manama, 4 Jan (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, amir of Bahrain, this morning received Nicholas Somer, defense secretary of the British Armed Forces [name and title as received].

During the meeting, his highness the amir of Bahrain welcomed the British secretary and praised the close ties that link the two friendly countries. His highness asserted Bahrain's eagerness to increase cooperation with the United Kingdom in various fields.

The two sides also exchanged viewpoints on recent developments in the region, international issues of common interest, as well as fields of military cooperation between Bahrain and the United Kingdom.

For his part, the British secretary stressed his country's eagerness to cooperate with Bahrain on all levels. He noted the progress in and development of Bahraini-British relations in various fields. He praised Bahrain's prestigious position and good reputation both regionally and internationally and the progress and cultural and economic development it has reached. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

Minister on Alexandria Summit, Inter-Arab Ties

NC0301093695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0805 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait, 3 Jan (MENA)—Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir, Kuwaiti first deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has stated that the Alexandria summit achieved major successes and ended the stagnation that had long beset the Arab countries. He declared that Kuwait has welcomed all the resolutions adopted by the summit.

In an interview with MENA's Kuwait correspondent, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad said that any success achieved by a number of Arab leaders is to be regarded as a success for all Arabs, noting that the Alexandria summit's success was a major one by any standard.

He praised the efforts made by President Husni Mubarak; King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques; and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to ensure the summit's success.

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad said he hopes that all inter-Arab differences will be resolved and that the circumstances that had prevented the holding of Arab summits will end. He voiced hope that the Arab world will be restored to its former condition.

Nevertheless, he ruled out holding an Arab summit in the next few months, pointing out that the circumstances are not yet right for such a meeting and the causes of Arab divisions still exist.

Asked if Kuwait would attend an Arab summit if it received an invitation, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad said that his country will be unable to participate in a summit unless the problems he mentioned are solved and Iraq implements all UN Security Council resolutions pertaining to its invasion of Kuwait.

He added that the Kuwaiti people will not allow their government to attend such summit conferences now. He noted that other Arab countries feel the same way about this issue.

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad explained that circumstances are not yet conducive to the elimination of inter-Arab differences, although there is a slight improvement in the general Arab situation.

He said that his country shares the Arab League's opinion that a frank exchange of views should precede Arab reconciliation so that it will be based on strong and realistic foundations.

Asked about Kuwait's current relations with the opposition countries [duwal al-didd—reference to Iraqi supporters during the Gulf crisis] Jordan, the PLO, Algeria, Yemen, Sudan, and Mauritania, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad voiced hopes that the causes for the poor relations between Kuwait and these countries will vanish and that normal relations will be restored.

He said: I hope we will see the day when the term opposition will be eliminated from the lexicon of Kuwaiti-Arab relations, particularly as it was only Iraq's invasion of Kuwait that brought such strange expressions into existence.

National Assembly Writes Off Egyptian, Syrian Debts

LD0301194795 Kuwait KSC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The National Assembly was convened this morning in an ordinary session under the chairmanship of Acting Speaker Salih Yusuf al-Fidalah.

A bill submitted by the government on writing off debts owed to Kuwait by Egypt and Syria and cancelling the accumulated interest on Kuwait's loans to certain developing countries was approved and referred back to the government. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

Yemen's Salih Telephones King Fahd

LD0301193795 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, received a

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telephone call today from President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Yemeni Republic.

This call comes within the context of the continuous cooperation between the custodian of the two holy mosques and his brother President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih to clear the air, entrench fraternal ties, and strengthen the foundations of security and stability, with the aim of attaining everything that achieves the aspirations of the two leaders and fraternal peoples.

United Arab Emirates

President Receives Russian Envoy, Yeltsin Note

JN0401104495 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0900 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Abu Dhabi, 4 Jan (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab Emirates [UAE], has received a letter from Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

Shaykh Hamdan Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan, UAE minister of state for foreign affairs, received the letter during his meeting this morning with Boris Kozyk, the Russian president's adviser for economic affairs, [name and title as received] who is currently visiting the UAE.

The Emirates News Agency said that during the meeting, the two sides discussed cooperation in various fields in light of the outcome of Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's visit to the UAE last November.

The Russian official arrived in Abu Dhabi at dawn today on a visit to the UAE that will last two days.

Multinational Bank To Be Privatized

LD0301203395 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Ahmad Bin-Humayyid al-Tayir, the minister of state for financial and industrial affairs in the United Arab Emirates, announced today that the Arab Bank of Investment and International Commerce, jointly owned by the UAE, Libya, and Algeria, was currently heading towards privatization. In a statement read out to the press, al-Tayir said that he expected the privatization process to be completed this year.

The U.S. Administration announced two years ago that it was freezing the bank's assets in the United States which are estimated at 570 million [UAE] dirhams, corresponding to 155 million dollars, because of Libya's participation in the bank's capital.

Al-Tayir also said that the bank's general assembly last year discussed raising the bank's shares and agreed to increase its capital by selling more shares to private investors in the UAE.

He added that the decision had resulted in an increase in the bank's paid capital by about 190 million dirhams, corresponding to 53 million dollars. Thus the paid capital would rise to 760 million dirhams, corresponding to 207 million dollars. [passage omitted]

Yemen

Report on Border Meeting With Saudi Officials

JN0301190495 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Report by Faysal Mukarram in Sanaa]

[FBIS Translated Text] Intensive contacts have been continuing between Sanaa and Riyadh over the past 24 hours to end the tension in various border areas and contain the deteriorating military conditions that developed over the past two days following clashes between border patrols from the two countries. These contacts have been fruitful.

Informed sources in Sanaa said a meeting was held yesterday afternoon between Yemeni and Saudi officials in a Yemeni area on the northwestern border. It was attended on the Yemeni side by the governor of al-Jawf, the deputy interior minister, and the commander of the Yemeni border forces. Representing the Saudi side were the Interior Ministry under secretary, the deputy amir of Najran, and the commander of the Saudi frontier guard.

The sources said the meeting produced positive results reflecting the desire of the Yemeni and Saudi governments to resolve border problems peacefully and through brotherly dialogue. The two sides agreed to withdraw forces to the positions they had occupied before the events of the past two days and to end all the military and nonmilitary measures that led to the escalation of the situation yesterday in areas north of the al-Jawf governorate of Yemen.

Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar has denied military clashes occurred between the two countries on the border over the past two days. In a statement in Sanaa yesterday, al-Ahmar said that the drive to restore Yemeni-Saudi relations to normal are continuing, invoking President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's upcoming visit to Riyadh and saying that it will emphasize the credibility of the two leaderships in resolving outstanding issues by brotherly dialogue and by a joint desire to stress the intimate relations between peoples in the two countries.

House Speaker on Saudi, Inter-Arab Ties

JN3012184394 Al-Dammam AL-YAWM in Arabic 27 Dec 94 pp 1, 21

[Interview with House of Representatives Speaker Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, by Muhammad al-'Aydarus, in Riyadh; date not given]

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[FBIS Translated Text] [al-'Aydarus] What can you tell us about your meeting with the custodian of the two holy mosques the day before yesterday?

[Al-Ahmar] It was a useful and fruitful meeting during which the custodian of the two holy mosques' wisdom and generous heart and interest in developing Saudi-Yemeni ties were evident. He asked me to pass on an invitation for President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih to visit the kingdom.

[Al-'Aydarus] How do you describe the present state of relations between Saudi Arabia and Yemen?

[Al-Ahmar] It is no secret that relations between our countries have been somewhat chilly recently. But this is a summer cloud that will soon disappear, God willing.

[Al-'Aydarus] The Aden Hospital, which was built with Saudi money at a cost of 22 million [currency not specified] was inaugurated the day before yesterday. How useful will that facility be?

[Al-Ahmar] That was just one among numerous Yemeni establishments financed by the kingdom; it is a virtual drop in the ocean.

[Al-'Aydarus] What benefits do you hope to derive from the hospital?

[Al-Ahmar] The benefits are undoubtedly varied and considerable, especially given that it is in Aden, the southern capital destroyed by the Socialist Party.

[Al-'Aydarus] Are you visiting the kingdom to further specific goals?

[Al-Ahmar] I am visiting the kingdom in the interest of our ties. I have been here many times. I am honored by deep personal relations with the custodian of the two holy mosques, the crown prince, and his highness the second deputy prime minister.

[Al-'Aydarus] A few weeks back there was a border problem between the kingdom and Yemen. A Saudi official source emphasized that the kingdom was keen to have normal relations with Yemen. Would you care to comment?

[Al-Ahmar] That was a passing incident of the kind that normally occurs on the borders between any two countries, be they agricultural lands or grasslands in the mountains. The incident has been blown out of all proportion by the media.

[Al-'Aydarus] You probably agree with the view that Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was in no small way responsible for the rifts in inter-Arab ties. How do you see a way out of these rifts?

[Al-Ahmar] The ruptures are indeed regrettable. The alienation between Arab states that followed the Iraqi aggression on Kuwait has persisted. We count very much on the wisdom and farsightedness of the custodian of the two holy mosques to repair Arab relations. These heart-rending ruptures and splits should not be allowed to continue. I think the Arab leaders must work to achieve coordination and solidarity.

[Al-'Aydarus] Do you see a rosy future for Saudi-Yemeni relations?

[Al-Ahmar] More than you can imagine. God willing, the Saudi-Yemeni relations will change for the better and return to normal, and they will be founded on cooperation and harmony. We have complete confidence in the wisdom and benevolent heart of the custodian of the two holy mosques.

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Paper Views Calls For Arab Reconciliation Summit

JN0401094695 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0720 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 4 Jan (INA)—BABIL has said the Arab summit for which there have been increasing demands to convene next month will require a series of measures to ensure that it can succeed in fulfilling its role and achieving its desired goal; namely, Arab reconciliation.

In an editorial today, the paper stresses that failing to prepare the requirements to achieve the summit's goal of bringing about a qualitative change in the nature of the current inter-Arab situation will turn it into a mere media event lasting for several days, while the situation remains just as bad as it is now.

The paper stresses that the first of these requirements is to stop the rush to serve the enemies' schemes, represented in the insistence of certain parties on maintaining the blockade against Iraq. This despite the fact that several parties that were directly involved in imposing the sanctions are convinced that it is now high time to take some measure to lift the embargo imposed on Iraqi oil exports in implementation of Paragraph 22 of Section C of Security Council Resolution 687.

In order to ensure the success of the reconciliation summit, BABIL advises those concerned with the goal of that summit to distance themselves from the formulas of hypocrisy and appeasement.

The paper says: The current circumstance, with its well known challenges, is critical and the fate of the nation hinges on it. Also, preserving the nation's solidarity, strength, and ability to defend at least its basic interests can be determined in the light of that circumstance.

The paper warns that if such a goal is not achieved, the nation will face further weakness, exhaustion, and usurpation of wealth. It will also allow others to decide its future and employ its resources for their own benefit.

The paper emphasizes the role of pan-Arab feelings and faith in the nation's own strength in formulating the fate and the future. The paper says: To ensure that the summit will be a success, everyone must have the conviction that the nation's interest is determined by the sons of the nation themselves and not by foreigners.

Washington Talks, Syria's 'One-Upmanship' Viewed

JN3012153494 Baghdad BABIL in Arabic 27 Dec 94 p 1

[Article by Mazhar 'Arif: "Failure of One-Upmanship"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Inspired by the rule that disagreement is the shortest way to fame, Syria's leaders have apparently decided, this time, to reach a final settlement with (Israel) through generals and not through politics. This has been confirmed by the current military meetings between Damascus and Tel Aviv, in the presence of Syrian and Zionist Chiefs of Staff al-Shihabi and Baraq, under the auspices of the U.S. godfather. According to Zionist Prime Minister Rabin, the talks will center on security arrangements and exchanging views on a final formula for an agreement between the Syrians and the Zionists.

No doubt, both the Syrians and the Zionists are interested in the status of the Golan. However, neither Rabin nor Syria has referred to this occupied Syrian territory annexed by "Israel," apparently to avoid embarrassment, at least on Syria's part, which deems the Golan a key to any solution. Tel Aviv insists on not returning the entire Golan to Syria.

It should be noted here that the very fact that Syrian negotiators are sitting at a first meeting on a settlement with their Zionist counterparts amounts to Syrian recognition of the Zionist entity. Syria, however, has tried to depict the situation in a different way, in keeping with its approach of one-upmanship. There is no doubt that the military meeting could not have been possible had it not been preceded by political meetings and based on a political framework. This is what is happening now—and what had happened in the past—between Damascus and Tel Aviv. What can Syria possibly say about its acceptance of a settlement, now that the very act of bargaining and one-upmanship no longer has any meaning?

'New' U.S. 'Aggression' Against Ship Condemned

JN0301191495 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1825 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 3 Jan (INA)—Iraq has strongly condemned a new U.S. military aggression against the Iraqi water transportation ship "al-Tharthar."

This came in a letter sent today by Nizar Hamdun, Iraq's permanent UN representative, to the UN secretary general.

Iraq held [words indistinct] for this new aggression [words indistinct] and to adopt the required measures to halt them and ensure their nonrecurrence [words indistinct].

[Words indistinct] approached the ship aboard a rubber boat [words indistinct] and boarded it. It inspected the ship, interrogated its crew, and severed communication between it and the coast centers.

In its letter, Iraq said that the U.S. military unit held the Iraqi ship for 10 hours before releasing it.

Nizar Hamdun also sent [words indistinct].

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U.S, West Said Aiding Iran's Nuclear Program

JN0401124495 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0950 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 4 Jan (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH has accused Washington and its Western allies of patronizing Iran's nuclear program and of covering Tehran's moves to acquire the technologies and expertise to manufacture nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

In an analysis published today, AL-THAWRAH notes a U.S. intelligence report that mentions information on Iran's quest to acquire nuclear technology and develop its military industry. The paper says that the enthusiasm of officials in Tehran to strengthen cooperation in the nuclear field with France, China, and other countries is no longer a secret, but is well known to the Central Intelligence Agency and other Western intelligence networks.

The paper notes the secret channels between Tehran and Washington and its Western allies. The paper says that no one moved to check Iran's nuclear ambitions and even the International Atomic Energy Agency remained silent over what is happening as if there was an agreement to turn a blind eye to what the Iranian regime is planning.

AL-THAWRAH draws attention to reports published by the Islamabad- based MIZAYID-E-TIMES [name as transliterated] on U.S. military cooperation with, and support for Iran. The paper says that a large number of the arms deals financed by the United States under the pretext of aiding the Afghan opposition had reached Iran.

The paper establishes a link between the U.S. military aid to Iran and cooperation in the military field between Tehran and Tel Aviv.

It says that what the MIZAYID-E-TIMES has revealed corresponded with the information revealed by Zionist Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin on Israeli military supplies to Iran. Rabin had told the secretariat of his party, the Israeli Labor Party, that his government had struck arms deals with Tehran including 120-mm shells.

BABIL Claims U.S. Admits Iraqi 'Victory'

JN0301204095 Baghdad BABIL in Arabic 29 Dec 94 p 1

[Editorial by Salah al-Mukhtar: Year 1994, the Year of America's Recognition of Iraq's Victory"]

[FBIS Translated Text] All evidence, indications, and clear facts stress that the mere steadfastness of Iraq in the face of the fiercest, most dangerous, and largest military aggression in history is a victory. Its steadfastness in the face of the largest-scale and most serious embargo in history and its ability to continue living regardless of the extremely difficult conditions is also a dazzling victory. Despite all this, the facts and lessons drawn from the year of 1994 have settled the issue of who emerged victorious from the most important strategic conflict ever witnessed in the history of the Arabian Gulf.

In 1990, when the inveterate criminal George Bush was preparing for the aggression against Iraq, he used a language and notions through which he was seeking to extricate the U.S. from the "Vietnam complex"—a complex of public American fear of involvement in any foreign war—which caused an American retreat in the 1970's. He prepared television programs and rallies depicting America as an invincible power that destroyed communism and brought the Soviet Union to its knees. Following the thirty-nation aggression, which was given boisterous media coverage—whose noise was far louder than that of the horrible aerial bombardment—the criminal Bush said: The Vietnam complex has been removed forever.

For four years, the American media and American officials kept talking in the same language of Bush, until the crisis of the crossing took place and a fierce campaign was staged against Bush accusing him of "negligence for failing to invade Baghdad". So, what did he say? He frankly admitted that the invasion of Baghdad would have caused a dilemma similar to that of Vietnam and that America was not ready to give sacrifices to do that. So, what does this mean?

It means the resistance and steadfastness of the Iraqi people have awakened the "Vietnam complex" and created yet another complex, that is, the "Iraq complex." It means that all his previous talk about victory was only the propaganda described by waffler Clinton during his electoral campaign against Bush. Therefore, the big, colored American balloon that was launched in the world's sky to stress "America's victory" was deflated by a small, yet, very strong Iraqi pin. The world came to know that America did not defeat Iraq. The Iraqis knew they had defeated America when they remained steadfast and alive and kept standing behind their great leader, Saddam Husayn. Does this not make year 1994 the year of the American recognition of Iraq's victory?

Turkey's Extension of Western Forces' Mandate Regretted

JN0201151195 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0725 GMT 2 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 2 Jan (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH has expressed regret over the Turkish Parliament's recent decision to extend the mandate of Western forces in Turkey and allow Western planes to fly over northern Iraq using the Turkish air base of Incerlik.

In an article published today, the paper, which speaks for the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, adds that this decision is both regrettable and surprising. This decision will have

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dire consequences for Turkey, given the deteriorating and aggravated security situation in Anatolia, the paper maintains.

The paper notes contradictions in Turkey's Iraq stand, saying that although it has realized that it has sustained losses as a result of the unfair economic sanctions clamped on Iraq, Turkey has unmistakably chosen to stand on the side of the Western alliance.

The paper concludes its article by urging Turkey, which will remain Iraq's neighbor, to pursue a new policy toward Iraq, one that is committed to safeguarding common security and common interests, given the religious, historical, geographic, and economic relations between the two countries. This is unachievable by pandering to the Western alliance's demands, the paper maintains, but rather by deeming Iraq's security, stability, and unity indispensable for security, peace, and stability in the entire region.

PRC Envoy Expects Exchange of Visits

JN0201112795 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0730 GMT 2 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 2 Jan (INA)—PRC Ambassador in Baghdad Sun Bigan has underscored his country's eagerness to promote its ties with Iraq during the current year.

In a statement to the newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH published today, Bigan expected an exchange of visits by high-level officials from the two countries to enhance bilateral economic and trade cooperation, which has witnessed tangible improvement in the recent past, in the interest of the two countries and peoples.

The PRC ambassador added that his country's government, in cooperation with France and Russia, has continued its efforts to ensure the issuance of a UN Security Council presidency statement acknowledging Iraq's positive cooperation with the United Nations.

The PRC ambassador went on to say: Once such a statement is issued, the UN Security Council will be required to seriously consider the implementation of Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687 pertaining to lifting the oil embargo clamped on Iraq.

The PRC ambassador asserted that there are well-known parties at the UN Security Council, the United States and Britain in particular, which are opposed to the issuance of such a statement. These parties, he added, are attempting to create justifications for the continuation of the embargo clamped on Iraq.

KDP-PUK Clashes in North Reportedly Continue

Barzani Issues Ultimatum to Talabani

MM0301143895 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 31 Dec 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by Zuhayr al-Qusaybati: "Barzani Issues 24-Hour Ultimatum to Talabani: Halt Attacks Or Government Will Be Dissolved"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] London—The mediation efforts made by Kurdish quarters and parties to hold a meeting between Kurdish leaders Mas'ud Barzani and Jalal Talabani in order to contain the clashes between their parties [Kurdistan Democratic Party, KDP, and Democratic Union of Kurdistan, PUK] in north Iraq have failed. An initiative by a 16-member Kurdish delegation which visited Talabani should have entered the stage of implementation yesterday morning. Talabani stressed to the delegation "the need to halt the fighting immediately and to expose the quarter violating the cease-fire," according to a PUK source.

Hushyar Zibari, spokesman for the KDP (led by Barzani), has revealed to AL-HAYAH that the party has issued an ultimatum to the PUK, hinting at dissolving the Kurdish government "unless all attacks on KDP positions are halted within 24 hours." Under the ultimatum, "the party considers itself free from any bilateral obligation with the PUK, whether inside the government or with regard to the bilateral agreements, and it will hold the PUK responsible for any potential consequences if it does not comply with the ultimatum."

Zibari pointed out that the ultimatum was issued after "the PUK launched a large-scale offensive against the KDP's headquarters in Irbil headed by Prime Minister Kusert Rasul 'Ali. The attackers suffered huge losses, and civilians were killed in the rocket bombardment."

He said that the situation in Irbil was tense yesterday, pointing out that Talabani and the PUK Political Bureau had agreed to the cease-fire, but "limited clashes took place (yesterday) in the fringes of Irbil and on the Tajuman [as transliterated] axis." Zibari said that the KDP "is demanding a cease-fire in Irbil and on all the axes and the removal of the armed roadblocks set up by the PUK at the approaches to the city, in addition to an urgent meeting between Barzani and Talabani."

He added: "We are relying on the efforts being made by the higher follow-up committee, headed by Dr. Ahmad al-Jalabi (chairman of the Unified Iraqi National Congress Executive Council), to arrange a cease-fire and hold the meeting."

Sami Shawrash, spokesman for the PUK, has confirmed to AL-HAYAH that Talabani replied on Thursday night to a KDP message threatening to escalate the fighting and torpedo the agreements concluded between the two parties. He said that Talabani "affirmed the PUK's willingness to spare bloodshed and halt the fighting immediately, provided the cease-fire on all axes is supervised by committees headed by the National Congress, and provided anyone who does not comply is condemned publicly."

The spokesman said that the PUK Political Bureau also replied to the KDP's message, stressing its desire for peace and its adherence to the alliance with the party "for the sake of boosting the democratic experiment and consolidating the rule of law." He urged the KDP

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leadership to "reactivate the higher committee's role and to agree to a cease-fire immediately, because peace is a joint responsibility." [passage omitted]

PUK Describes Collapse of Agreement

NC0301181895 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1620 GMT 3 Jan 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] After the strategic agreement was signed by the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] and the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] on 21 November 1994, the PUK thought that the KDP would cease for at least a few years its irresponsible practices in dealing with the Kurdish people's resources or review its stances on several sensitive fateful issues involving the Kurdistan parliament and government.

But reality proved the absolute opposite. The KDP continued to evade the implementation of the provisions of the agreement the two sides signed. They embarked on a series of terrorist operations and irresponsible conduct. All this paved the way for the collapse of the agreement the two parties had signed.

We can sum up the KDP's terrorist operations and irresponsible conduct in the following points:

1. On 18 December, less than a month after the strategic agreement was signed, over 5,000 KDP gunmen attacked the city of Shaqlawah. Battles started between the PUK followers and a limited number of government employees, not more than 60, on the one hand, and the big KDP attacking force on the other. Battles raged for three days, during which the PUK headquarters were occupied, including brother Talabani's summer house. [passage indistinct]

PUK States Readiness To Halt Fighting

LD0301133995 Tehran IRNA in English 1231 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sanandaj, Kordestan Prov., Jan. 3, IRNA—Kurdish sources in northern Iraq said Monday [2 January] that fierce street clashes broke out in Irbil between members of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) Monday morning.

The belligerent parties attacked the city, capital of the self-proclaimed government of Iraqi Kurdistan, with artillery and other heavy weapons sunday night, inflicting heavy losses and damage on civilians, the sources added. Following the attacks, people of Irbil formed defence groups to confront the PUK forces. Details on exact number of casualties and degree of damage are not available from independent sources.

According to reports from al-Sulaymaniyah, following heavy clashes with the PUK forces Monday morning, the KDP forces have gained control of the Halabjah-al-Sulaymaniyah axis and are only 20 kms. from al-Sulaymaniyah.

The PUK political bureau in a statement issued Monday to the leaders of Kurdish parties, the Kurdistan Front as well as the Iraqi National Congress, announced its readiness to halt the clashes.

Inflated Death Toll Denied

NC0301221995 Paris AFP in English 1904 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Paris, Jan 3 (AFP)—An Iraqi Kurdish official in Paris said Tuesday [3 January] that about 50 people had died in clashes between rival Kurdish factions in northern Iraq in the last few days, denying much higher figures given in the region.

Muhammad Ismail, representative in France of the self-proclaimed Kurdish government in the region, denied a figure given by the Iranian official news agency IRNA, which said 472 had died in the main town of Irbil alone.

"The clashes of the last few days have left about 20 fighters of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) dead ... and 20-25 among those of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP)," he said.

IRNA reported earlier in the day that street fighting had spread to the northern city of Irbil. Quoting Kurdish sources, it said fighting erupted Monday [2 January] in several districts of the city between PUK and KDP loyalists.

The two groups, which clashed several times last year in a bitter power struggle, pounded the city with artillery fire late Sunday causing heavy losses among the civilian population and damage, it said.

No independent estimates were available for casualty figures from the latest round of clashes in the region, which erupted on December 24.

Ismail added that a truce agreed Sunday had been broadly respected. "The ceasefire has been globally respected, except some violations, since Sunday evening when a joint statement signed by the two Kurdish leaders called on the parties to stop fighting," he said.

The self-proclaimed Kurdish government in northern Iraq comprises members of the PUK and the KDP. The area has been under Kurdish control with the backing of a U.S.-led multinational coalition since the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf war which drove Iraqi forces out of Kuwait.

A round of PUK-KDP fighting in August claimed almost 400 lives.

PUK Reportedly Gains Upper Hand

NC0301223095 Paris AFP in English 2045 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Jan 3 (AFP)—The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) has gained the

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upper hand in clashes with the rival Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), winning control of Irbil, the main city in Kurdish-held northern Iraq, press reports said Tuesday [3 January].

The Iraqi government newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH said the PUK led by Jalal Talabani had "gained control of Irbil following fierce clashes which left some 300 people dead on Monday alone."

The London-based Saudi newspaper AL-HAYAT also said Irbil had fallen to the PUK and Mas'ud Barzani's KDP had "withdrawn completely from the city."

The Kurdish groups, which have controlled northern Iraq in defiance of Baghdad since the January-February 1991 Gulf war, have their administrative headquarters in Irbil.

The PUK and KDP each have seven ministers in the self-proclaimed Iraqi Kurdish government.

UN coordinator in Iraq Muhammad Zijjari told AFP that UN humanitarian activities, suspended for more than a week due to the unrest, resumed on Tuesday.

"UN officials managed to get food lorries to Irbil, where the situation is calmer" than on Monday, he said, adding that there were no UN casualties in the fighting.

Zijjari said fighting was still going on in Suleymaniyah governorate, east of Irbil, which is mostly controlled by the PUK.

The latest round of fighting between the rival groups erupted on December 24.

After nearly 400 people were killed in clashes last August the two groups announced a joint command on November 25 to prevent further feuding.

In Paris Muhammad Ismail, representative in France of the self- proclaimed Kurdish government, said Tuesday about 50 people had died in the clashes in northern Iraq in the last few days.

"The clashes of the last few days have left about 20 fighters of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) dead ... and 20-25 among those of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP)," he said.

Earlier the Iraqi official news agency INA said 472 had died in Irbil alone.

AL-JUMHURIYAH said the PUK had captured the Kurdish interior "minister" Yunus Rojbani and education "minister" Nasih Ghafur, both KDP members.

The newspaper also said that the PUK on Monday opened up a violent artillery barrage on Mas'ud Barzani's residence, some 30 kilometres (18 miles) north of Irbil, killing 12 members of his personal guard.

Barzani's family fled to Dohuk, nearly a 100 kilometres (60 miles) to the northwest, which is still under the KDP control.

AL-JUMHURIYAH also said 51 PUK members were taken prisoner by the KDP during a battle on the Penjwin-Halabjah road, near the Iranian border.

The official Iranian news agency IRNA reported that PUK forces seized control of the strategic Halabjah-al-Sulaymaniyah road on Monday, and were only 20 kilometres (12 miles) from al-Sulaymaniyah.

Papers Report on Battles

JN0401103995 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0940 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 4 Jan (INA)—Reports from the Autonomous Region in northern Iraq say that Talabani's gang, which has won control of Irbil, has committed ugly massacres, executing 141 prisoners loyal to the renegade Barzani.

Reports published by AL-JUMHURIYAH and AL-'IRAQ say that criminal Nushirwan Mustafa supervised the mass execution. He ordered the release of all supporters of the renegade Jalal Talabani and the execution of all Barzani supporters who were detained at Mahatat Irbil prison.

The reports add that Arslan Bayiz, official in charge of the third center of the so-called Patriotic Union of Kurdistan in Irbil, attacked the house of Nasir Ghafur, who is described as the education minister, took him prisoner, beat him up, set his house on fire, and killed five of his bodyguards.

The reports note that criminal Kusart Rasul led a large force in an attack against parliament members loyal to Barzani. The force arrested them and their bodyguards and looted their houses, and then set them on fire. The force also killed a parliament member, Mulla Hadi.

The reports said that Talabani supporters have reached the Mulla 'Umar area on the Irbil-Salah-al-Din resort road in groups led by renegade 'Umar Fattah, member of the political bureau of the so- called Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. A bloody battle ensued, which, until yesterday, left 48 Talabani supporters and 31 Barzani supporters dead. The battle also resulted in the destruction of Mulla 'Umar complex.

U.S.-Led Forces Said To Bomb al-Mawsil Suburbs

LD0301204895 Tehran IRNA in English 1831 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sanandaj (Kurdistan Province), 3 Jan (IRNA)—Voice of Iraq's Islamic Movement of Kurdistan (IMK) announced today that the American-led allied forces, stationed at the Incirlik base in Turkey, fired seven rockets on the suburbs of al-Mawsil, northern Iraq on Monday [2 January].

However, the rockets exploded before hitting the pre-planned targets, added the radio.

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No information is available on probable damage or casualties.

According to the radio the rockets were aimed at the Iraqi Army concentration post.

The province of Diyala, with its capital al-Mawsil, is in the hands of the Iraqi Government while Iraqi Kurds have the provinces of Dahuk, Irbil, and al-Sulaymaniyah under their control.

Saddam Allocates Funds for Maysan Marshlands

JN0401123795 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Leader President Saddam Husayn has ordered the allocation of 41,887,000 million dinars to peasant families residing in villages [word indistinct] in the Maysan Governorate marshlands.

This was stated by Maysan Governor Ahmad 'Abdallah Salih to the Iraqi News Agency's correspondence in the governorate. [passage omitted]

Trade Minister Meets Jordanian Industrial Delegates

JN0401150995 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1420 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 4 Jan (INA)—Trade Minister Muhammad Mahdi Salih today received the Jordanian industrialists and businessmen delegation led by Khaldun Abu-Hassan, chairman of the Amman Chamber of Industry.

The two sides discussed economic and trade relations of cooperation between Jordanian industrialists and businessmen and Iraqi merchants, and means of promoting them.

Khaldun Abu-Hassan, chairman of the Amman Chamber of Industry, expressed the desire of the Jordanian industrialists and businessmen to establish relations with their Iraqi brothers in all fields in the service of the two fraternal peoples' interests, and in a way which contributes to breaking the unjust blockade clamped on Iraq.

Trade Ministry Announces Jan Rations

JN0101134595 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 1 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In a statement, the Trade Ministry has announced the January 1995 rations as follows:
- —Flour: Six kg per person at a price of 690 fils.
- —Rice: 1.25 kg per person at a price of 375 fils.
- —Sugar: 500 grams per person at a price of 100 fils.
- —Tea: 100 grams per person at a price of 200 fils.
- —Fat: 625 grams per person at a price of 400 fils.
- —Cleaning detergents: 250 grams per person at a price of 200 fils.
- —Soap: 150 grams per person at a price of 135 fils.

Total cost per person: Two dinars and 100 fils.

Rations per child under one year of age:
- —Four cans of baby formula each weighing 450 grams at a price of three dinars.
- —Cleaning detergents: 250 grams at a price of 200 fils.
- —Soap: 150 grams at a price of 135 fils.

Total cost per child: Three dinars and 335 fils.

Decree Sets 2,000-Dinar Fee for New Passport

JN0101173295 Baghdad BABIL in Arabic 28 Dec 94 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] The Revolution Command Council [RCC] has issued a decree according to which a sum of 2,000 dinars is to be collected for the issuance of a new passport.

The following is the text of the decree:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

The Republic of Iraq

The RCC

Decree No. 213

Date 16 Rajab 1415 Hegira, corresponding to 19 December 1994

Decree: In accordance with the provisions of Paragraph A of Article 42 of the Constitution, the RCC has decided the following:

1. A sum of 2,000 dinars shall be collected for issuing a passport.

2. This decree shall be implemented as of the date it is published in the Official Gazette.

[Signed] RCC Chairman Saddam Husayn

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Ministerial Committee Rules on Efrat Construction

TA0301172895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A ministerial committee headed by the prime minister decided this afternoon that construction on Hazayit Hill, adjacent to Efrat, will be carried out in accordance with the local blueprint. At the same time, the government will cancel the agreement under which work has been carried out on Giv'at Hatamar, which is more distant. The government further says that any form of construction or infrastructure work outside Hazayit Hill will be pending a cabinet approval. The decision was made by the prime minister and Ministers Shohat, Liba'i, Aloni, and Ben-Eli'ezer.

Knesset Member Hanan Porat who heads the society that wants to build near Efrat told our correspondent Gil Litman that the decision to cancel construction on Hatamar Hill is very grave, and the association is examining the option of filing a petition with the High Court of Justice against the ban.

The Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza says that the decision is tantamount to submitting to the Arabs and constitutes a threat to continued settlement.

Settlers Threaten Protests, More Construction

TA0401125195 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 4 Jan 95 p 7

[Report by Itamar Eichner]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Yesterday, the settlers in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip [YESHA'] categorically rejected the decision by a ministerial committee to halt work on Tamar Hill and transfer construction activity to Hazayit Hill. They declared that they would initiate spectacular protest measures in the near future.

The Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip held an emergency meeting yesterday in which it decided to begin widespread construction activity, station dozens of new trailers, and flesh out existing settlements in the territories in an attempt to embarrass the government and derail the political process. YESHA' Council spokesman Aharon Domb stressed that there is no intention of establishing new settlements and that construction efforts will be limited to the building plans of existing settlements.

The YESHA' Council has launched an emergency fund-raising drive to finance additional construction in the territories. Yehi'el Leiter, head of the council's overseas desk, will leave today for a lightning visit to the United States in order to recruit funds from American Jewish communities. In the next few weeks, the council will announce a nationwide fund-raising drive for settlement activity in the territories.

The council members refuse to divulge any details regarding the precise location and dates of the construction drive. It has been learned, however, that every settlement in the territories will soon be called upon to start building housing units within its perimeters. At the same time, the settlers will purchase dozens of trailers and station them inside the settlements.

According to Domb, "the cabinet ministers have decided to strangle the settlement endeavor. Until now, they have tried to dry us up; now they are strangling us. We will not let them do this."

The settlers are considering a number of other plans. According to one plan, protest activities will continue on Tamar Hill in spite of the ministerial committee's decision. The plan calls for thousands of settlers to arrive at the site on foot and camp out overnight in trailers and tents. The crowds will try to continue construction work on Tamar Hill while "defending the tractors and the trailers against the army."

The settlers are also considering moving the protest activity from Tamar Hill to another site near Efrat or the 'Etzyon Bloc in order to catch the army off guard. [passage omitted]

Tax Benefits Continue for Settlement Residents

TA0101200395 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 1 Jan 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] All settlements beyond the Green Line continue to enjoy the tax benefits that apply to development areas.

Our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik points out that the government decided to freeze settlements, reclassifying national priority zones not to include almost any of the territories, but it seems that tax benefits for all Israeli residents of the territories have remained unchanged.

Decision on Efrat Termed 'Surrender to Violence'

TA0301110895 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 3 Jan 95 p 6

[Editorial: "The Efrat Compromise"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin made a valiant attempt in yesterday's Knesset debate to make his solution to the al-Khidr-Efrat crisis seem like a compromise. Construction on Tamar Hill, 1.5 kilometers from Efrat's built-up area, would immediately stop, even though the government had issued permits for it. But building on a hill abutting Efrat, known as Hazayit Hill, would be allowed. However, the government gave no assurances that building would resume immediately. A special ministerial committee would be appointed to oversee the work not only at Efrat, but in all Judaea,

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Samaria, and Gaza communities. This would give the government greater control over building in the administered territories.

The trouble with this compromise lurks not so much in its conditions as in the message it sends. Even if the ministerial committee lets work begin immediately on Hazayit Hill—something the government's past performance does not encourage one to believe—the retreat from the government's original decision signals surrender to violence.

The facts are plain enough. After determining the barren, rocky, never-cultivated Tamar Hill was state land, the government leased it to residents of Efrat. Then, once all legal requirements were meticulously met, it gave the go-ahead for the construction of homes, and bulldozers began preparing the land for building.

At this point, leaders of the Peace Bloc, a fringe group in the Israeli "peace camp," agitated against the project. Their claim that the building is contrary to the Oslo Agreement, a claim echoed by the Palestinian Authority, is baseless. There is not a word about freezing building in settlements in the agreement. Nor is it reasonable to expect an existing population to stop growing. The argument that building in the Jewish towns "changes the status quo," as Peace Bloc leader Uri Avneri said yesterday, is also specious. Nothing has changed the status quo more rapidly and decisively than the profuse building by Arabs in the administered territories, against which no one, least of all the "peace camp," has protested.

What hides behind these arguments is a simple conviction that the whole area of Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza should not only be evacuated by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and become a Palestinian state, but that it should become, like Jordan and Saudi Arabia, "free of Jews." It is a vision of peace which Meretz ministers, peace camp activists, and the PLO share.

This alliance produced demonstrations on Tamar Hill in which Israeli leftists were joined by elements of Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], and Islamic Jihad, all from the neighboring village of al-Khidr. Together they battled the army and police, inflicting injuries on at least seven members of the security forces. That none of the Arab residents of al-Khidr ever owned any land on the hill was irrelevant. As they themselves made clear, the struggle was not legal, but political.

Concomitantly, Palestinian Authority officials and their Israeli Arab allies, including Yasir 'Arafat adviser Ahmad al-Tibi and Arab Knesset members, began a campaign of threats, warning that the negotiations between Israel and the PLO would cease and intifada violence resume if work in Tamar Hill continued. Foreign governments chimed in with pleas to Jerusalem not to allow the "process" to collapse. The government, embarrassed by the whole affair, put up no resistance. It agreed to stop work on Tamar Hill.

That the PLO would have actually carried out its threat to suspend the talks for any length of time is highly doubtful. The next step in the implementation of the Declaration of Principles [DOP] is the "redeployment" of the army—its withdrawal from the Arab population centers. The Palestinians are much too eager to see this happen to cause delays. The threat of violence, too, is hollow. The wave of terrorist violence since the signing of the DOP already has no equal in the country's history.

The Palestinians and Israel's Peace Bloc can hardly be blamed for celebrating a victory after yesterday's government decision. The moral of the Tamar Hill story is all too plain: Israeli government decisions the PLO does not like can be reversed by threats and a little rioting. Even before the end of the Efrat saga, al-Tibi and his followers carried their protests to other sites on which Israelis want to build. It is not difficult to guess that the Jerusalem suburbs and exurbs, also located in what the PLO and most of the world community consider "occupied territory," will be their next targets.

Government Seen 'Crumbling' Over Efrat Affair

TA0301145795 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 3 Jan 95 p 2

[Editorial: "Between the Hills"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli Government fell between the hills south of Efrat. It was not a parliamentary fall, God forbid, but it was a real, painful fall that will hurt for a long time.

By adopting a compromise, the government tried to somehow extricate itself from the grip of those who pressure it, but the result is that none of the pressures has been eased and, in fact, the government has become vulnerable to additional pressures—on other hills, on other moves, on the inside, on the negotiating terms and, perhaps most importantly, on the public opinion front. It would have been much better for the government to make a insightful and clear decision that would leave some of the pressures. Instead it made a half-baked decision that left the whole pressure system intact, and even stronger.

When he repeated three times his "al-Quds" call three days ago, 'Arafat determined the boundaries of the argument: It is not over this or another hill on the road to Efrat, but over Jerusalem. The government—led by a person and a party who have pledged allegiance to Jerusalem and the 'Etzyon Bloc—has not dealt with him properly. It withdrew northward, from one hill to another, in what some military men would call "improving his position." The move signals to 'Arafat—and the signal is clear to the Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza settlers—that he has an interlocutor willing to compromise.

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The same signal goes to the left, with the additional clause that the government is willing to surrender to its violence.

In the meantime, our political vocabulary has been enriched by several other disputed terms, such as "greater Jerusalem." The battle for Jerusalem is not being waged on the surrounding hills. It takes place in the heart of the city and did not start yesterday. Anyone trying to hide this fact and pretend that it is not so, is misleading others. What good would Jerusalem be to us if we surrounded it with a belt of settlements while failing to control the city center, while 'Arafat screams "al-Quds" from Gaza.

So what did the government gain from all this? It gained some time, until next time, wherever it might happen. The prime minister came up with yet another special ministerial committee that he chairs (has anyone counted them recently?). And, more importantly, he again proved to everyone just how tight the SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] chains on his wrists are. After all, the compromise was not presented by Yasir 'Arafat, Efrat Council Chairman Yinon Ahiman, or the left-wing demonstrators. He was pushed into a corner of compromise by SHAS threats. From Rabin's point of view, his only gain is that he once again proved to Meretz that it can really do nothing.

And in the meantime, between two hills, the government is crumbling.

Jerusalem Forum Plans 'Metropolitan City'

TA0401124295 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 4 Jan 95 p 9

[Report by Gabi Brun and 'Ofer Petersburg]

[FBIS Translated Text] A new plan to turn Jerusalem and the towns surrounding it, both within and outside the Green Line, into a single metropolitan city will be submitted to the Interior Ministry and to the Jerusalem Municipality within the next few days. The metropolitan city would be governed by an elected council, headed by the mayor of Jerusalem.

The plan was drafted by the "Metropolitan Jerusalem Forum," made up of residents of areas adjacent to Jerusalem beyond the Green Line, such as Ma'ale Adumim, Giv'at Ze'ev, the 'Etzyon Bloc, and Betar 'Ilit. According to Beni Kashri'el, mayor of Ma'ale Adumim and chairman of the forum, the plan enjoys the support of 70 Knesset members [MK], many of them members of Labor.

The plan envisages Jerusalem as a single metropolitan city, like London and its boroughs or Paris and its peripheries. The metropolitan council would be elected in municipal elections and would consist of representatives from all the locations, including those within the Green Line, such as Mevasseret Ziyyon, Zur Hadassa, Qiryat 'Anavim, and others.

According to the plan, there would be territorial contiguity between Jerusalem, the northern Dead Sea, and the Jordan Valley, while the Jericho autonomous area would remain a closed enclave within an area controlled by Israel. A road planned to the east of Jerusalem as an extension of the Modi'in-Jerusalem highway would serve as the main traffic artery for residents of Samaria wishing to get to Jericho.

The plan is based on existing approved blueprints, parts of which are undergoing detailed planning by the Israel Land Administration. According to MK's 'Imanu'el Zismann and Yehoshu'a Matza, the plan was submitted to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin by Minister Shim'on Shetrit and MK Zismann in the framework of their activities in "The Third Way" group. According to them, Rabin gave his agreement in principle but had reservations about the plan's maximalist approach and argued that it could harm the cause of Jerusalem's status.

The attendant map is based on the "Alon Plan." The border of "Metropolitan Jerusalem" would pass near the settlements of Matityahu and Hashmona'im, close to the boundaries of Ramallah, follow the municipal boundary of northern Jerusalem up to 'Atarot Airport, proceed northward to the east of Al-Birah in the direction of Bet El, 'Ofra, and the Tall 'Asur mountain, and would link up with the outer rim of the Jordan Valley on the Alon Highway.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin would not directly reply to YEDI'OT AHARONOT's question about the "map of Metropolitan Jerusalem." He said: "I have not been presented any map. The boundaries of united Jerusalem were set in June 1967 and in accordance with the Basic Law: Jerusalem, enacted in 1980. No government has changed the decisions made to date, and there is no debate under way about changing the boundaries of Jerusalem. There is broad national consensus on the question of Jerusalem, and there are no plans to discuss this question."

MK Matza said last night that the map resembles the map once presented to him by Construction Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer, which contained detailed plans to expand the locations surrounding Jerusalem to areas earmarked in the blueprint.

The opposition has mobilized all its members in anticipation of the debate scheduled to be held in the Knesset today on a bill submitted by Likud MK Eliyahu Ben-Elisar on extending Israel's sovereignty to the 'Etzyon Bloc.

Baraq Appointed 'Special Adviser' to Rabin

TA0201111995 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 2 Jan 95 p 1

[Report by Moti Bassok]

[FBIS Translated Text] Outgoing Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq starts a new career today as special adviser to the prime minister, as well as becoming a businessman.

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Baraq has received a new office with all the trappings in Tel Aviv's Qirya government-military complex, a short distance from the defense minister's office.

His post has not yet been clearly defined, but it is clear that in the first stage Rabin is designating him as head of the Israeli delegation to the military talks with Syria alongside Israel's ambassador, Professor Itamar Rabinovich.

Rabinovich will continue to head the delegation along the Syrian track and will also conduct the secret talks with Syrian Ambassador Walid al-Mu'allim in Washington.

Rabin has assigned Baraq as an adviser and special envoy, including sensitive missions. The prime minister's bureau said yesterday it believes Baraq will also go into private business, as he has said many times in recent months.

In the coming days, a meeting is expected to be held between Baraq and Labor Secretary General Nisim Zvili, who plans to suggest to him that he join the party as a candidate for senior posts.

Shahaq Assumes Post as IDF Chief of Staff

TA0101084795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 1 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The ceremony at the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem in which Amnon Lipkin-Shahaq assumed command of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] ended a short while ago. In his farewell remarks to the outgoing chief of staff, Rabin said Ehud Baraq's term was characterized by the saving of human lives and by the army's becoming more efficient. You were great, Rabin told Baraq, adding that there will be more opportunities to praise him in the future.

Addressing the new chief of staff, Lieutenant General Amnon Lipkin-Shahaq, Rabin said he has confidence in both his military leadership and his political experience and knows that the IDF will go far under his command. The prime minister expressed the hope that the new chief of staff will lead the army in times of peace.

Outgoing Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq said he is handing Shahaq a strong, confident army. Lt. Gen. Lipkin-Shahaq said he is assuming the heaviest of burdens: responsibility for the IDF.

MK Claims Soldier Kidnapped; IDF Denies Claim

TA0301164095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1605 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Announcer] Here is a special report from our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe in the Tel Aviv studio:

[Menashe] This afternoon, an unidentified person telephoned Qol Yisra'el's Arabic service and claimed that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] had kidnapped an Israeli soldier this morning. No proof was given that an abduction indeed took place.

The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the defense establishment looked into the issue and reported that not a single soldier is missing. The investigation into the affair continues. [passage omitted]

[Announcer] Thank you Karmela. We at Qol Yisra'el have been following this story all day but, naturally, we could not broadcast it due to censorship restrictions.

But it appears that the Knesset is under no particular constraints. Speaking from the podium this morning, Knesset Member [MK] Rabbi Ba-Gad revealed to those sitting in the plenum and in front of the Israel Television Channel 3 cameras a report that he claimed was correct, but now appears not to be, that a soldier had been kidnapped. [passage omitted]

IDF Confirms Pursuit in Gaza, Denies Arrests

TA0401054095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has denied reports that uncover troops were arrested inside the Palestinian autonomous area of the Gaza Strip, after Palestinian security chief, General Nasr Yusuf, said 12 IDF soldiers were arrested in a white minibus in Khan Yunus.

An IDF statement confirmed that soldiers did enter the Gaza autonomous area yesterday while pursuing a car they suspected was carrying a kidnapped soldier. The IDF said there was contact between the Palestinian police and the soldiers when their car got stuck in mud, but gave no further details.

Representatives from the Israel-Palestinian liaison office arrived at the scene, and the soldiers later left the Strip. Yusuf had claimed that his agents had questioned 12 soldiers, photographed them, and taken down their weapon registration numbers before handing them over to the Israel-Palestinian liaison office.

Hamas, IDF Soldiers Clash in Nabulus

TA0301124295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers clashed with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] members in Nabulus this morning. The incident took place during a Fatah rally. Our correspondent Dani Zaqen reports that the Hamas members mingled with the thousands of Fatah activists and threw stones from the crowd at Fatah members and at Israeli cars traveling the main street in Nabulus. IDF soldiers rushed to the site. The Hamas men threw firebombs at them, and the soldiers shot back. No one was hurt. The IDF closed down downtown Nabulus.

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Shots at IDF Post in Qatif Bloc Cause No Damage

TA0301191695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A short while ago, shots were fired from an ambush at an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] lookout post southeast of the Qatif landing pad. No one was hurt and no damage was caused. Our correspondent Nisim Qeynan reports that the soldiers returned fire.

Arab Wounded at Erez; Hamas Men Arrested in Tulkarm

TA0401114195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Shots were fired two hours ago at a Border Police patrol at the Erez crossing. No Israeli soldiers were hurt. In response, they opened fire in all directions and, as a result, a Palestinian bystander was shot and lightly wounded. Palestinian police fired in the air as the incident took place. Qol Yisra'el's reporter on the scene says both Israeli and Palestinian police officers have arrived on the scene and are investigating. At this hour, the Erez checkpoint has been temporarily closed.

Security forces have arrested seven Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists in Tulkarm. Qol Yisra'el's reporter in the territories says the arrests took place in a dawn raid as part of a wide-ranging operation by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] against Hamas terrorism.

Ramallah Resident Shot by Masked Men in City Center

TA0201095395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 2 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The man killed in this morning's incident in the village of Bayt Awla was Basam Masalmi, and Arab sources said he was not on the wanted list. Our correspondent Dani Zaqen reports that security forces did not manage to capture a second man, who escaped. The area is now closed and the searches continue.

Mufid Darani, a Ramallah resident of about 40, was shot dead by masked men near his shop in the city center this morning. Arab sources told our correspondent Dani Zaqen that the man, who was shot at the entrance to the shop, was seriously wounded, and later died in Ramallah Hospital. Israeli Police are investigating the incident.

Right-Wing Group Says Rabin 'Deserves To Die'

TA0201095795 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 2 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The militant right-wing Sword of David movement this morning issued a leaflet saying that the prime minister deserves to die. The leaflet says that Rabin is permitting Jewish blood to be spilled freely, is a traitor, and wants to sell Jerusalem by receiving the archmurderer 'Arafat and giving his organization legitimacy and the right to Israel.

Police Ban East Jerusalem News Conference

TA0201100395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 2 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Jerusalem police have banned a news conference a Palestinian organization wanted to hold at the Ambassador Hotel in East Jerusalem.

Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that Jerusalem police Commander Arye 'Amit and policemen from the Minorities' Unit who arrived at the hotel announced that higher echelons have banned the news conference. The Palestinian Committee for the Defense of Lands and Water wanted to express its opposition to the expansion of settlements. Ambassador Hotel manager Muna Mata told our correspondent that policemen informed her that a planned Palestinian Authority gathering cannot take place. Members of the Palestinian Committee for the Defense of Lands and Water are currently convening a news conference in the street.

Netanyahu on 'Withdrawal Package' in Lebanon, Golan

TA0101192095 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 1 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu has accused the government of trying to mislead the public with regard to the negotiations with Syria. According to Netanyahu, the government wants to use Hizballah's attacks in southern Lebanon as a lever to justify an overall withdrawall from southern Lebanon as well as from the Golan Heights. Netanyahu was the guest of the Haifa Press Club today, and our correspondent Qobi Mandel was there, too:

[Begin recording] [Mandel] Knesset Member Binyamin Netanyahu today drew a picture of a dire situation with regard to the negotiations with the Syrians, claiming that talk of security arrangements only means a descent from the Golan Heights. Netanyahu said the government is trying to mislead the public in its talk about security arrangements which, according to Netanyahu, do not exist except for the presence of IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers and tanks on the Golan; in upgrading the talks with the Syrians, which is merely a means for getting the IDF off the Golan Heights; and also, in using Lebanon like Gaza First.

[Netanyahu] The government says there is no solution to the Hizballah attacks other than a political one. In other words, the idea of fighting terror, striking at it, and repelling it, as we have done, and quite successfully. We gained a few years of quiet, albeit not total quiet, because total quiet does not exist. One cannot deal terror a single blow and rest on his laurels; one should rather wage an ongoing war against it.

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Talking of a political solution only is a codeword for withdrawal. The aim of the government today is to use those terrorist acts in southern Lebanon as a lever. I am not saying it invites these acts, but I am saying it uses them politically in order to begin justifying an overall withdrawal package which will leave us without security, neither on the Golan nor in southern Lebanon. The result of this policy will be a Syrian belt which will begin in Rosh Haniqra and surround us all the way to Bet She'an, through the Golan Heights, in circumstances where Israel's strategic condition will worsen a hundredfold.

[Mandel] Binyamin Netanyahu added that the true Syrian option for war will only exist if the IDF withdraws from the Golan Heights and the Syrians then do not have force to curb them. [end recording]

Commentary Views Peace Talks With Syria

TA0301162795 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 3 Jan 95 p B1

[Commentary by 'Aqiva Eldar: "Terrorism Is the Key"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Senior U.S. Administration officials leaked to THE NEW YORK TIMES that only because of President Clinton's intervention did the Syrian president forgive the Israeli disclosure about the first meeting between Ambassador Walid al-Mu'allim and Ehud Baraq. Following a White House telephone call to Damascus, Hikmat al-Shihabi was dispatched to meet with Itamar Rabinovich. It now comes about that the visitors were secretly smuggled into the President's office. Warren Christopher was given unprecedented rehabilitation: according to the report, in May the secretary thought up the ambassadorial track, in August he initiated the meeting of experts, and in November he organized the chiefs of staff summit.

There is no doubt that the U.S. Administration is very interested in being the sponsor of Israel's peace accord with Syria and Lebanon. They are convinced that an agreement based only on Jordan and the Palestinians is flimsy. Clinton told the ambassadors and chiefs of staff that time is running out and pledged to al-Asad once again that there could only be a comprehensive peace. But ever since the first time that al-Asad heard that promise, the Palestinians and Jordanians, Morocco, Tunisia, Oman, and Qatar have left him. He no longer has the bargaining chip of Syrian Jewry, and Damascus residents seek refuge in their shelters every time Peres suggests Israel should join the Arab League. The Alexandria summit and Hizballah shelling reminded Israel, and even more so the United States, that al-Asad will not give up his last asset since joining the Madrid conference: terrorism.

The Americans can perhaps convince Saudi Arabia not to pressure the Gulf states to adapt their pace of drawing closer to Israel to progress in the talks with Syria, but the reports about using the officers meeting to transmit messages to Syria to restrain Hizballah could be ridiculed had human lives not been involved. The removal of Shiite units from south Lebanon will only take place within a framework that includes the evacuation of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] from the Golan Heights and Syria's removal from the American list of states that support terror.

Just as Palestinian terrorism will decide whether the Oslo accords are an electoral asset or liability to the Rabin government, Shiite terrorism in Lebanon dictates the future of the peace accords with Syria and its electoral repercussions. Israel's withdrawal from the Golan Heights and tourist trips to Damascus can wait until after the elections in Israel and the United States. Israel has managed for 48 years without having peace with Syria. Al-Asad has been peering out of his window at Israeli guns for 27 years. However, the Israeli and American publics are sensitive to the fate of each soldier (look at the excitement in the United States over the pilot taken prisoner in North Korea), putting south Lebanon at the top of the agenda on the Israeli-Syrian-American track; Rabin cannot permit himself to declare even the slightest of concessions on the Golan as long as Syrian proteges kill Israeli soldiers. The Republicans will make mincemeat out of Clinton if he asks for congressional permission to dispatch American soldiers to a region in which Shiite terrorists operate. Under such conditions, a proposal to remove Syria from the list of terrorist states will not pass even the Democrats.

A senior Israeli source in Washington hinted at the only way out of the imbroglio. He declared that there will be no withdrawal on the Golan as long as the area is not clear of terrorism. In other words, clearing all of south Lebanon of the Hizballah forces and the Rejectionist Front commands has to take place during the stage of Israel's withdrawal to the interim line on the Golan Heights (Majdal Shams First). That will permit Israel to remove the IDF from Lebanon and sign a peace accord with its government. At the same time, Israel will make a commitment that at the conclusion of an agreed upon interim stage (18 months to three years), if the test is successful, it will hand over the Golan Heights to a multinational force headed by the United States. Syria will announce the cessation of the state of belligerency and will enter into an agreed upon track of normalization, while the United States will wipe it off the list of terrorist states and will allocate economic aid—even if only symbolic—to it. Terrorism is therefore either the obstacle or the number one excuse. Its cessation is the incentive or the most concrete compensation for a concession.

A peace accord with Syria is within reach. The problem is that al-Asad will find the concoction palatable only if it is presented by an American waiter (would Rabin buy a plan from al-Asad?). Christopher has visited the Middle East a dozen times over the past two years, Rabinovich and al-Mu'allim have held two dozen meetings over seven months, and Clinton has conferred twice with al-Asad in 1994.

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What has come out of all this? That the only superpower managed to smuggle chiefs of staff into the Oval Office for a photograph with the President, hid ambassadors in bedrooms, and arranged a report in THE NEW YORK TIMES with descriptions of Oslo. We can only hope that the new Congress, which will convene tomorrow for the first time under Republican leadership, will leave Clinton time to deal seriously with the Middle East.

'Analyst' Says No Middle East Peace Without Iraq

TA2912132194 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 29 Dec 94 p A1

[Report by political correspondent Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Speaking at a closed forum last week, a senior analyst said there will be no comprehensive peace in the Middle East without Iraq. "When talking about a comprehensive peace in our region, Iraq cannot be taken out of the picture," he said adding that Iraq is a very important factor in the region and still is a potential threat to Israel.

The source further said that Iraq could disrupt the peace process with neighboring countries, but noted that presently Israel is unable to take steps against Iraq because of, among other things, the international sanctions imposed on it and the U.S. opposition to any type of openness toward the Baghdad regime.

The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Intelligence Branch will complete its annual intelligence estimate in the coming days, and will then present it to the political echelons. The estimate is currently in the final stages of discussions by the branch's top brass.

Foreign Ministry officials have recently spoken in favor of incorporating Iraq in the peace process. According to them, the United States is preventing Israel from seizing an important political opportunity to reach peace with Iraq at a time when Iraq is signaling its willingness to have ties with Israel. According to the officials, the United States makes pronouncements regarding the dual containment policy against Iraq and Iran but, in fact, is not curbing Iran and focuses only on Iraq.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres oppose a rapprochement between Israel and Iraq. Rabin stresses that Israel supports the U.S. dual containment policy, while Peres says there is no point in making any contacts with Iraqi President Saddam Husayn because the man is mad and unreliable. Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin believes that Israel should not hold any contacts with Iraq while it is subject to international sanctions and disobeys the UN Security Council resolutions. [passage omitted]

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'Informed Sources' Expect Cabinet Reshuffle

JN0301134295 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 3 Jan 95 p 1

[Report by Ghadir Tahir]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—His Majesty King Husayn returned last night from a private visit to Austria with the first task at home expected to be the appointment of a new government to replace Prime Minister Abd al-Salam al-Majali's cabinet.

Informed sources expected King Husayn to ask Royal Court Chief al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir to head the new government, which will have to deal with the political and economic changes accompanying the Jordan-Israel peace agreement, the kingdom's regional role, internal politics and relations with the Palestine National Authority.

Government sources would only say that they have not heard anything official on a cabinet change.

Independent sources said that a new government may be formed as early as Thursday. However, the sources cautioned that nothing was definite yet.

The sources said King Husayn's statements to representatives of the local press last week indicated that the kingdom was gearing up for a major government overhaul.

They said the King wants to appoint a new government that can deal with new realities on the ground.

"Reorganisation is necessary since this is a new, different era in Jordan's life and it needs to be governed by a new spirit and fresh efforts," the King told journalists.

The King did not say whether he would appoint a new government or order a major reshuffle to undertake the job, but reports since then have strongly indicated that a new prime minister would be appointed to deal with the peace era and with the challenges Jordan faces internally and otherwise.

The sources, who spoke to the JORDAN TIMES yesterday, said the King's reference to profound change at the meeting, from which Dr. al-Majali was conspicuously absent, indicated that the reorganisation that he had in mind may go beyond the government to include the Royal Court and other official institutions.

"Change is made necessary sometimes not because (officials) have not performed well, but rather because new responsibilities and different people are required to handle them," the King told journalists.

Al-Sharif Zayd, who formed his first government in 1989 and stepped down in late 1989 after overseeing the first democratic elections in the country since 1956, is tipped by political sources to succeed Dr. al-Majali, who has been in office since May 1993.

Al-Sharif Zayd took over the premiership again in October 1991 and stayed in power without changes until the appointment of Dr. al- Majali.

The sources said that after the 1995 budget was endorsed by the Lower House of Parliament with a 52-22 vote last week, Dr. al- Majali's resignation was "only a matter of time which will not exceed one to two weeks."

The Senate is expected to endorse the budget in the next several days after which it will be signed into law by the King.

Earlier, observers predicted that the King may turn to someone outside the "club of prime ministers" in reference to six men who have taken turns in heading the government over the last quarter century to form a new government.

According to the sources, the new government, whether a reshuffled one under Dr. al-Majali or otherwise, may include the following: Deputies Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, Salih Irshaydat, 'Ali Abu-al-Raghib, Samir al-Habashinah, 'Awad Khulayfat, 'Arif al- Batayinah, 'Abdallah al-Nusur, 'Abd-al-Karim al-Dughmi and 'Abd-al- Hadi al-Majali, former Finance Minister Basil Jardanah, former Interior Minister Salim al-Masa'idah, former Information Minister Ibrahim 'Izz-al-Din, Minister of Supply 'Adil al-Qudah, and Minister of Industry and Trade Rima Khalaf.

One of the strongest contenders to replace al-Sharif Zayd, if he is appointed prime minister at the Royal Court is the King's political advisor Marwan al-Qasim. But the sources cautioned that the King, who is known to keep his options open until the last moment, may surprise everyone and keep Dr. al-Majali on as premier or make a surprise appointment.

Israeli Charge Interviewed on Ties, Opposition

JN3012175194 Amman SHIHAN in Arabic 31 Dec 94-6 Jan 95 pp 8-9

[Interview with Israeli Charge d'Affaires Ya'aqov Rosen by Jihad Abu-Baydar in Amman; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Abu-Baydar] What do you think of the position of the Jordanian opposition, particularly the Muslim Brotherhood, on the peace process?

[Rosen] First of all, Jordan is a free kingdom, and everyone has the right of free expression. There are people in Jordan and Israel who are skeptical about peace for different reasons. Some people say: We have an agreement, fine, but where are the dividends of peace? The people want to see the achievements of peace. The Muslim Brotherhood, just like other political and religious movements, have doubts. I tell them: Give us a chance, one year for example, to see the beginning of achievements and economic stability.

[Abu-Baydar] Let me interrupt you here. The Muslim Brotherhood, or the opposition in general, is against the

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agreement in principle. They do not care about achievements. In fact, some opposition factions have sanctioned the killing of Israelis who come to Jordan. What do you think of this?

[Rosen] This argument is absolutely unacceptable, and we do not allow the sanctioning of the blood of Israelis. We think, however, that we should be given some time and when the economic and social conditions improve, then people will realize that peace has positive aspects.

[Abu-Baydar] So you believe that the opposition and the Muslim Brotherhood movement will eventually accept the peace treaty?

[Rosen] I have been a diplomat for 20 years. My political and diplomatic experience has taught me that everything is possible. Some people spoke against peace 20 years ago. But the people, and especially the opposition, change. They are not stupid. They will see new things and witness changes, and this will affect their outlook. I hope they will change their position. In two years time, they may change their attitudes. I am optimistic about that.

[Abu-Baydar] I understand from this that the Israeli Government has a certain view of the Muslim Brotherhood movement in Jordan? What is this view?

[Rosen] I do not want to talk about a particular movement. This movement opposes the peace treaty and tries to deal with it democratically as part of freedom of expression. Many people change their views. As the Israeli Government, we hope that the Brotherhood movement, the communists, and any other movement in the Arab world will change their attitudes.

[Abu-Baydar] As a charge d'affaires, do you expect the opposition, which you call extremist, to attack the Israeli Embassy?

[Rosen] No. We do not expect that. This is our official position. We have not reached the stage of violent, bloody attacks, because violence causes bitterness, blood, and other things. We in Israel have an Islamic movement of the 1948 Arabs. They are Israelis, and some of them are mayors. So far, they have not run for elections in the Knesset because this, according to them, means recognizing the Israeli Government. They are against this principle now, but they are debating this issue and, God willing, they will reach agreement on this issue.

[Abu-Baydar] Would you like to visit the Jordanian parliament and meet with deputies and officials?

[Rosen] Yes, I would like to visit the Jordanian parliament and make some other visits. We have a working program to visit the parliament speaker and all the institutions, but the time has not come yet. We have priorities, and the first thing is to establish ties with the ministries and then the journalists so that information is transmitted back and forth. Through the press, we will send a message to the public and after that comes the role of the parliament and the opposition. If the Muslim Brotherhood agrees, I will visit its headquarters. We do not mind having contacts with any Jordanian party or movement, and we shall seek to do that with all political movements and currents in Jordan if these movements are ready for this. [passage omitted]

[Abu-Baydar] It is said that the Israeli Embassy in Amman is part of the Mosad and that it is spying on Jordan.

[Rosen] Go and see each room in the embassy for yourself. Where is the Mosad? What you are talking about is the mentality of the 1950's generation. Now, the era of secrets and conspiracies is over, and we are all playing our game out in the open. We, as embassies, do not come here to spy on you. In this era, diplomatic relations constitute the base—economy and trade, but not spying. In other words, "as long as you are a producer you stay on your feet. If you are not, then you fall on the ground." There is nothing called Mosad. This is something from the past. There was a Mosad a long time ago. [passage omitted]

[Abu-Baydar] Did you ask that a Jewish synagogue be built in Jordan for worship?

[Rosen] No we did not. Your Jordanian law ensures the right to worship. Read the Jordanian Constitution and you will see that you do ensure the right to worship.

[Abu-Baydar] There is an article in the agreement that stipulates the exchange of labor between the two sides. Will you take Jordanian workers to work in Israel?

(The Israeli charge d'affaires picks up the peace treaty and looks up the article on economic cooperation.)

[Rosen] If you look here in the treaty, you will see that there is an article on this issue. Now, a joint committee is discussing the possibilities and arrangements to attract workers even if it constitutes a great number of them. The economic logic says: Get a Jordanian worker instead of someone else. Both sides are in favor of this. [passage omitted]

[Abu-Baydar] There is a dispute between the prime minister and the foreign minister in Israel on naming the Israeli ambassador in Amman. What is the truth behind this dispute?

[Rosen] This, in fact, is a principled dispute. The prime minister is saying: We now have a peace treaty and I, as a prime minister, want a person who is close to me and whom I have known for a long time to be my ambassador to Jordan. Meanwhile, the foreign minister is saying: Let us appoint a good ambassador who has diplomacy because we have begun the era of diplomacy. Let us appoint a good diplomat at the embassy—one who has served in the diplomatic corps. This is what happened and so far they have not agreed on naming the ambassador.

[Abu-Baydar] You have signed a peace accord with the Palestinians. Are you in favor of establishing a Palestinian state?

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[Rosen] We do not recognize the state of Palestine and Jerusalem is our capital forever. The Palestinians now have a geographic area; that is, a state with authorities and without borders. We do not allow them to conclude international treaties because they are not a state. [passage omitted]

[Abu-Baydar] Is there any rapprochement between Iraq and Israel and are there any contacts between the two sides?

[Rosen] There are no contacts with Iraq. There were Iraqi and not Israeli attempts because Israel has a clear stand on Iraq due to its problems with the United Nations. Some have approached us to mediate between us and Iraq. However, we refused. The Israeli stand now is to have no relations or rapprochement with Iraq whatsoever. [passage omitted]

Talks Held With Israeli Businessmen in Amman

JN0401115695 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 4 Jan 95 p 3

[Article by P.V. Vivekanand]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Amman—The heads of the Jordanian and Israeli federations of chambers of commerce met for the first time in Amman on Tuesday [3 January] in what was described as an Israeli message of assurance to Jordanians that peace has its economic dividends that could be reaped together.

Dan Gillerman, head of the Israeli Federation of Chambers of Chambers of Commerce, who led the Israeli team to the talks with Haidar Murad, president of the Jordanian Federation of Commerce, described the meetings as aimed at setting up a framework for relations between the two sides.

Mr. Gillerman said that during the meeting it was agreed to work towards formalising an agreement on cooperation between the two federations, and look closely at joint ventures that would allow Jordanians to take advantage of the privileged status Israel enjoys under accords signed with the United States and Europe.

According to Mr. Gillerman, Israeli manufacturers and exporters were interested in exploring possibilities of setting up joint ventures under which "the manufacturing could be done in Jordan and the finishing could be done in Israel."

The finished products could be exported to North America and Europe under favourable terms which include tariff-free Israeli imports to those countries under the privileged trade agreements that Israel has concluded, noted Mr. Gillerman, who sounded highly positive about prospects for such projects.

"We are aware that there is scepticism among Jordanians about the pace at which economic cooperation with Israel should proceed and over the dividends of peace," said Mr. Gillerman.

"I believe that our visit here is very timely (given this scepticism) in that it is sending a message to Jordanians that 'peace pays' and the 'dividends of peace are there and there to be reaped together.'"

"It is the first time that the heads of the federations of chambers of commerce of the two countries met," noted Mr. Gillerman, who arrived here on Monday leading a 25-member delegation for talks with Mr. Gillerman said the meeting was suggested by His Royal Highness Crown Prime Hasan on the fringes of the Oct. 30-Nov. 1 economic conference on the Middle East and North Africa held in Casablanca, Morocco.

During the meeting, attended by the members of the board of the Jordanian Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Mr. Murad "advocated a cautious approach to economic ties," Mr. Gillerman told the JORDAN TIMES in a telephone interview.

Mr. Murad also emphasised the need to create a mechanism for cooperation between the Israeli and Jordanian private sectors addressing the concerns of both sides, he said.

The two sides also discussed preparations for a conference to be held in Amman this year as a follow-up to the Casablanca meeting and possibilities of joint projects to be presented at the gathering, Mr. Gillerman said.

Also discussed during Tuesday's talks was the creation of a regional chamber of commerce, "which, hopefully, will eventually include all other countries in the region—Syria, Lebanon and Iraq," Mr. Gillerman said.

Mr. Gillerman described the members of the delegation accompanying him as distinguished businessmen with large operations in Israel in foodstuff, medicine, textiles, and agriculture.

The team also includes heads of the largest department stores in Israel which would like to import Jordanian products, he said.

"There is also a firm commitment to hold a Jordan Week in Israel," to familiariese Israelis with Jordanian products, Mr. Gillerman said, adding that no date had been fixed for the event.

The Israeli team also invited Mr. Murad to visit Israel along with a delegation of Jordanians interested in doing business with Israelis, he added.

No comment was immediately available from Mr. Murad.

Simultaneous with the formal talks between the federation heads and officials, members of the Israeli delegation met with Jordanian businessmen to discuss immediate possibilities of trade.

However, no actual deal until the two sides finalise a trade accord as called for in the peace treaty.

The Israeli team, which included several Israeli bankers, crossed to Jordan through the newly opened Jordan

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River Bridge and will return home across the al-'Arabah crossing in the south after visiting Petra on Wednesday.

The team's visit came amid reports that Israel expects to conclude a most favoured nation (MFN) trade agreement with Jordan within weeks. [passage omitted]

House Speaker Confers With Iraqi Counterpart

JN0201155195 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 2 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Engineer Sa'd Hayil Surur, House of Representatives speaker, received Sa'di Mahdi Salih, Iraqi National Assembly speaker, at his office in Parliament this afternoon.

Talks dealt with bilateral fraternal relations in all fields and the upcoming meeting of the Arab Parliamentary Union, which will convene in Morocco, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union meeting that will be held in Madrid in late March of this year.

Minister Denies U.S. Asked To Extradite Convict

JN0401120695 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 4 Jan 95 pp 1, 14

[Report by Nabil Ghayshan]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Justice Minister Hisham al-Tall has denied any knowledge of a request allegedly submitted to the U.S. Justice Department through the Jordanian ambassador in Washington to extradite Saudi national Muhammad Jamal Khalifah who is imprisoned in the United States. The Jordanian military court had sentenced Khalifah to death on charges of financing the Jordanian Afghans.

The justice minister told AL-ASWAQ: We did not prepare any file for extraditing Muhammad Khalifah, and the Jordanian Justice Ministry did not submit any request to the U.S. Department of Justice in this respect. He stressed that the sentence is not a definitive sentence as all sentences passed by the military court are appealable under the law. [passage omitted]

Al-Tall said that Jordan and the United States had initialed an extradition agreement during a visit by a Jordanian judicial delegation to Washington. The date and venue for signing the agreement has not been set, as yet. The minister said the agreement has nothing to do with any extradition request. He said: Upon the conclusion of the agreement, any of the two parties has the right under the agreement to seek the extradition of a criminal who was sentenced by its courts or a defendant who is being prosecuted in the other country.

On the other hand, Ahmad al-Mubayyidin, director of the Foreign Ministry's Information Department, has stated that the Foreign Ministry knows nothing about any extradition request concerning Khalifah. He said: But, under the law, Jordan can seek the extradition of any criminal who has escaped from justice if he committed his crime in Jordan. [passage omitted]

Muslim Brotherhood Leader Views al-Baq'ah Attack

JN0301204595 Amman AL-SABIL in Arabic 3-9 Jan 95 P 32

[FBIS Translated Text] Exclusive to AL-SABIL—The attack on a security post in the al-Baq'ah [Palestinian] refugee camp following the verdicts handed down in what has come to be known as the Jordanian Afghans came as something of a surprise to various Jordanian political circles. They note that, for one thing, the incident is the first of its kind, and, for another, given the kind of the prevailing political conditions, that it could usher in a situation comparable to what is happening in some Arab and Muslim states.

AL-SABIL solicited the opinion of 'Abd-al-Majid al-Dhunaybat, controller general of the Muslim Brotherhood, representing the Islamic mainstream current in Jordan. The Muslim Brotherhood, says Dhunaybat, was surprised by the news of the attack. On this occasion, he added, we restate our rejection of all forms of violence no matter where it originates and urge the government agencies concerned to probe the underlying causes and handle the affair responsibly, soberly, and rationally lest, God forbid, it turn into a phenomenon that could upset public tranquility and security. At the same time, we would like to emphasize that we care for the security of the homeland and the individual alike, and his freedom and dignity. It should make no difference whether that individual holds an official position or is an ordinary citizen, since all of us are, so to speak, in one boat that no one should be permitted to scuttle.

To quote the Koran: It is those who believe and mix not their beliefs with wrong—that are truly in security, for they are on right guidance.

AL-SABIL asked the Brotherhood's controller general, in his capacity as an attorney, what he thought of the verdicts handed down by the State Security Court against the defendants and which are believed to be among the underlying reasons of the attack.

His answer: One of the achievements that should be credited to the previous House of Representatives is the abrogation of martial law and the amendment of many laws so as to advance the cause of individual justice. State Security Courts verdicts, as a result, are now appealable before the appeals court. Having looked at the verdicts handed down in the case of the Jordanian Afghans, a designation that we have reservations about, I hope the appeals court will retry this case in the interest of justice, the sovereignty of the law, and security for the country and the individual.

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Al-Hirawi Receives Syrian Military Delegation

NC3012125494 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1230 GMT 30 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Just in from Yazbik Wahbah, our correspondent at the B'abda Palace:

[Begin recording] At 1425 today, Major General Ibrahim Safi, commander of the Syrian forces operating in Lebanon, and Brigadier General Ghazi Kan'an, chief of the Syrian military intelligence within the Syrian forces Lebanon, arrived at B'abda Palace along with their wives. President al-Hirawi received the guests and had lunch with them in the presence of Michel al-Murr, deputy prime minister and interior minister, and Raymond Rufayil, director general of the Public Security Forces. This is all we have for now. [end recording]

Dallul on Resistance, Collaborators, Bombing

NC3112100494 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 31 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul has stated that the Lebanese Resistance has inflicted human and material losses on the enemy, affected his morale, and made him pay dearly. In a statement to the magazine AL-BILAD, he said that the enemy seeks to instigate public opinion against the Resistance men. He stressed the need to rally around and support the Resistance and secure popular backing to enable it to achieve its goals. He noted that raising the slogan of resistance is a priority and the bright torch in the darkness befalling the region. He said that the Zionist enemy began to budge as a result of the resistance action and is planning to embark on operations like the bombing of the Sfayr car bomb [21 December car bomb in Beirut's Southern Suburb].

Dallul declared that numerous threads have been (?uncovered) besides the Sfayr bombing. He said that a number of soldiers who were dealing with the enemy were discharged from the army and others were transferred outside the areas adjacent to the directly or indirectly occupied areas. He stressed that any collaborators with the Zionist enemy will be punished, particularly Antoine Lahd's agents, who plotted against the homeland.

Birri Stresses Resolution 425, 'Resistance'

NC3112203194 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2000 GMT 31 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Addressing delegations which had come to give him New Year's greetings, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri said that as long as an inch of our land, either in the south or the western al-Biqa', remains occupied, the situation will not be resolved. He added: We own Resolution 425 and the resistance; we hold Resolution 425 in one hand and the resistance in the other.

Birri stressed that the resistance cannot take its course without internal stability ensured by the state's security institutions such as the army, the security forces, the public security forces, and the state security force.

Speaker on U.S. Travel Ban, Negotiations

NC0301204895 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri today received well wishers on the holiday season. He voiced his hope that all Lebanese institutions, primarily the Chamber of Deputies, which represents the people, will improve. He made these remarks during a meeting with the reporters accredited to the Chamber of Deputies on the occasion of the holiday season. He answered questions on most current Lebanese issues.

On the security committee, Birri said that if the committee sidesteps the issue of the U.S. ban on travel to Lebanon during its talks in Washington, this would be worse than drawing a red line.

He noted that anything that might infringe on Security Council Resolution 425, which is our main issue, would be unacceptable. Birri stressed that President al-Hirawi and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri are keen on this issue.

Birri said that from the outset the issue of security in Lebanon was political, noting that he told this to the Americans. He stressed that the Lebanese Security Committee discussions in Washington will only focus on the U.S. air traffic ban on Lebanon, which is a U.S. problem, not a Lebanese one.

Birri said that President al-Hirawi, Prime Minister al-Hariri, and himself are keen not to allow any infringement on Resolution 425 or the Resistance. He noted that the U.S. officials did not request any guarantees.

On the negotiations, he noted that the Israeli officials' visits to Arab countries will not affect the negotiations but emphasize the pressure on Lebanon and Syria to establish an unfair and noncomprehensive peace in the region. He expressed his belief that the current year will be crucial for the negotiations.

Birri recalled that the al-Ta'if Accord is based on two key foundations.

Al-Hirawi-Fadlallah Discussions Reported

NC3112133994 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 31 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Sources of 'Allamah Fadlallah have asserted that the president confirmed to Fadlallah that the Lebanese-U.S. security committee will not discuss any issue beyond lifting the ban on Americans' travel to Lebanon, particularly the resistance.

For his part, Fadlallah underlined the importance of being cautious about this affair's military objectives.

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Hizballah Leader Deplores Talks With U.S.

NC3112091194 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 31 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli has said that the Lebanese authorities will seek to negotiate with the Americans the situation of Hizballah and of the people living around the Beirut airport. He said: It makes no difference whether they discuss this issue either by debating the security of Americans or the Zionists. He expressed surprise at how such things happen and in this way, while the sons of the Southern Suburb of Beirut had their streets bombed by the Americans. He noted that what is going on is very serious and the regime is acting maliciously in a way that is hostile to the Lebanese and the resistance men and to the sons of the Southern Suburb who deserve to be honored and not plotted against.

About Rabin's visit to the Sultanate of Oman, Shaykh al-Tuyfayli said: We are aware that Zionist relations with the Sultanate of Oman go back 18 years and the same goes for Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia and this [word indistinct]. He added: In the past we used to denounce the Arab leaders and certain people were surprised by our denunciation. However, things have come out into the open these days. What we used to say about these rulers was totally true: They are agents of the Zionist enemy and they prevented their peoples from resisting the Zionist enemy.

Shaykh Praises Summit, Shuns Normalization

NC3112090994 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 31 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din, chairman of the Higher Islamic Shiite Council, has praised the Arab summit held in Cairo [as heard]. He said that it took place to confront the Israeli violation of Arab right. He wished that the summit had been expanded to include the majority of Arab leaders. Shams-al-Din said that there was no need to hold the Casablanca summit nor reception of Zionist leaders by certain Arab leaders at a time when the enemy persists in killing and assassinating civilians in their villages in Palestine and south Lebanon. He noted that no matter which Arab leaders meet Zionist leaders, they will not be able to make Israel a normal organ of the Arab body. He warned any parliament against enacting laws allowing normalization of relations with the enemy. He stressed rejection of joint industrial projects with the enemy, because normalization of ties with the enemy would create disasters that the Arab region cannot bear. [passage omitted]

Israel Said Bringing Armored Cars Into South

NC0401070795 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Guarded calm reigns in the areas adjacent to the occupied territories in the wake of the continuing Israeli attacks and movements inside the occupied border strip. Reports from the eastern sector indicate that Israel has brought armored cars onto the frontlines of the western al-Biqa' axis. [passage omitted]

The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondents have observed that the Israeli forces have begun using cluster bombs as part of a new policy to curb the resistance operations against their positions.

Judge Issues Arrest Warrants for Bombing Suspects

NC3112173794 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 31 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Within the investigations into the bombing in Sfayr [in Beirut's southern suburb on 21 December], Riyad Tulay', the first military investigating judge, has issued warrants to remand suspects Hanan Yasin, Suhayl Himsi, and Wafiq Nasir, who are in custody. He also issued warrants for the arrest of Tawfiq Nasir and Ahmad al-Hallaq.

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Prime Minister Chairs Council of Ministers Meeting

JN0301134795 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Council of Ministers held a meeting at 1100 today under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi. During the session, the council discussed current political developments, and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' gave a briefing on developments in both the Arab and international arenas. He also reviewed the positive results of the tripartite summit held in Alexandria, as well as developments in the peace process of the region. [passage omitted]

TISHRIN Commends Outcome of Alexandria Summit

JN0201092295 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 2 Jan 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the headline "A Strong Boost to Joint Arab Action," the newspaper TISHRIN says: The Alexandria summit has underscored the need to promote the role being played by the Arab League and its institutions so that the League may remain the mother Arab organization that fosters all aspects of inter-Arab action in keeping with the sublime objectives of the League as contained in the League Charter.

The paper addresses the challenges posed to the Arab nation, saying: The Arab League can provide a significant and effective framework for joint Arab action to fortify the pan-Arab stand against all the dangers posed to Arab rights. Undoubtedly, the joint Arab action institutions that are affiliates of the Arab League are capable of performing pan-Arab duties and shouldering pan-Arab responsibilities related to vital and strategic Arab interests. Any threat posed to any part of Arab territory is bound to hit the entire Arab territory.

TISHRIN adds: Therefore, the Arabs should make a serious effort to rectify their own affairs, as well as the affairs of their countries and region. They are required to demonstrate clarity of vision, adhere to goals, and develop sound strategies in order to remedy the Arab state of affairs and foster the constants and principles agreed on by the Arabs within the context of the Arab League, as enshrined in the Arab League Charter.

The paper goes on to say: There is a need to strengthen the common Arab stand against Israeli penetrations, to confront these penetrations, and to eliminate the dangers that they pose in a manner that protects Arab rights, safeguards Arab existence, and secures the pan-Arab destiny.

TISHRIN says: The strong boost the Alexandria summit has given to pan-Arab action has come to confirm the inadmissibility of abandoning pan-Arab principles, and to demonstrate that the peace process should not necessarily result in the Arabs accepting all the ideas and schemes designed by Israel, nor in a rush to pander to Israel to achieve purposes and objectives that contravene the higher pan-Arab interests.

The paper adds: The significant and positive results of the Alexandria summit have created a real opportunity for the Arabs to effect a renaissance and promote their role, influence, and leverage on the regional and international scenes. Likewise, the Alexandria summit enhanced the conviction that the Arabs are capable of protecting their existence, safeguarding their destiny, and regaining their rights through continuous joint Arab action, and also through a unified Arab stand that adheres to the constants of Arab rights and epitomizes the Arabs' ambitions and aspirations.

TISHRIN goes on to say: Therefore, the Arabs should adhere to the conditions and opportunities created by the summit. They must benefit from the results it has yielded. This is essential if joint Arab action is to be promoted, and if a forceful solidarity that clears the Arab atmosphere and promotes a just and comprehensive peace grounded in the basic Arab constants is to be achieved. There is no doubt that these approaches constitute the real answer to Israel's schemes and ideas, which aim to impose its hegemony on the Middle East region and obliterate this region's pan-Arab identity through suspicious and condemnable calls. Out of awareness of the requirements of vital Arab interests, Syria has done its utmost to reestablish joint Arab action and enhance the Arab League's role and its pan-Arab institutions in order to promote the status of the Arabs so that all Arabs may shoulder their historic and pan-Arab responsibilities in full.

TISHRIN concludes by saying that Syria has demonstrated credibility, as well as an eagerness to achieve just and comprehensive peace on the basis of the principle of trading land for peace, as clearly manifested in the premise of full peace in exchange for complete withdrawal it has upheld.

Paper: 'Unequal Security Arrangements' Not Possible

JN0301123095 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 3 Jan 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] The newspaper TISHRIN comments on the regional peace process, and the intransigent and obstructionist Israeli stands, saying: The fact that Israel is holding on to the occupied Arab territories demonstrates that it is not seeking peace, and that it still has a long way to go to meet the requirements of peace. It has become obvious that whoever is opposed to withdrawal from the Golan plants a mine along the road of the peace process.

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The paper adds: Syria has said its final word in this regard. From the outset of the peace talks, it has linked comprehensive peace to complete withdrawal. It also demanded the withdrawal of occupation troops to the 4 June 1967 borders.

The paper goes on to say: The achievement of peace is a strategic option for Syria. Nonetheless, Syria will never accept the possibility of a single inch of the territory of the Golan or southern Lebanon remaining under occupation. Similarly, it will not accept unequal security arrangements. Moreover, Syria believes that the relinquishment of part of the territory is tantamount to a relinquishment of dignity that marks a departure from the course of equitable, just, and comprehensive peace.

Radio Faults Israel Settlements, 'Unilateral' Deals

JN0301154395 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 3 Jan 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear listeners: It is clear that the prospects for Middle East peace are diminishing. Over three years after the convening of the Madrid conference, the cause of peace is still blocked by Israel's refusal to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories and to return to the borders that existed before 4 June, 1967. Despite Israel's peace allegations, Israeli leaders still prefer keeping the land over establishing a just and firm peace in the region that will bring about security and stability. Israel has destroyed many opportunities to achieve a comprehensive peace by refusing to respond to the proposals Syria presented during the Washington talks, exploiting the situation in southern Lebanon, and pushing the Palestinian side into the trap of the unilateral Oslo agreement. The result was what we see today: A crisis on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks and serious troubles in the occupied Palestinian territories. The Palestinian people have discovered that the Oslo agreement is being used just as an excuse to continue the settlement process, to change the features of the land, and to Judaize Jerusalem.

The expansion operations in the Efrat settlement have exposed Israel's plans to strip the Palestinians of the remainder of their territories and to turn them into refugees without land. Israel is destroying the peace process and undermining international endeavors under the very nose of the world. It is well known that the Israeli leaders have pledged to stop all settlement activities in return for U.S. loan guarantees. Washington itself disclosed that Israel has violated its commitments and used part of the American money to build and expand the settlements. In fact, Israel has used all the loan guarantees to Judaize the city of Jerusalem. Under the cover of greater Jerusalem, Israel has annexed more than 40 percent of the West Bank to Jerusalem and given houses to settlers in the area with the purpose of changing its demographic structure. At the same time, it continues the policy of devouring the remaining Palestinian territories by expanding West Bank settlements, as it did in the Efrat settlement, under the nose of the world, when the Zionist settlers seized the lands of the Palestinian village of al-Khadir, and by sending bulldozers to change the features of the land.

These Israeli practices expose Israel's rejection of peace and its continued attempts to expand. What has further aggravated the situation is that some Arabs have fallen into Israel's trap and are also plunging into plans to normalize relations with it under the pretext of supporting the peace process.

Peace is a big lie in the mouth of the Israeli leaders, who say something and contradict it on the ground. Contrary to the land- for-peace principle, the land is still occupied, Israel has not yet returned one piece of land to the Arabs, the Golan is still occupied, southern Lebanon is still occupied, Jerusalem is still confiscated, the West Bank is still moaning under occupation and the settlement process, and the Gaza Strip has become the scene of rampages by Israeli forces. Israel has withdrawn from the Gaza Strip to avert what the Israelis themselves called Gaza Hell. But Gaza is still besieged, and all the Palestinian people are in a large prison.

This serious situation that is threatening with unexpected explosions has prompted Syria, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia to hold the Alexandria summit meeting and to begin an overall review of the Arab situation. It was clear to President al-Asad, President Mubarak, and King Fahd that the disruption of the Arab situation has helped Israel disavow the requirements of the peace process and derail it from its course and its goals. The Arab-Israeli conflict is a pan- Arab one. Therefore, any peace with Israel should be a pan-Arab affair, and nobody should act unilaterally. Those who have acted unilaterally are reaping bitter fruit and are causing serious damage to the Palestinian cause in particular and the Arab cause in general.

Attempts to improve the Arab situation and achieve a just peace require an Arab review of everything. Facts speak for themselves. The main fact is that the occupied territories are still occupied, that usurped Arab rights are still usurped, and that peace is still postponed. The Arabs have no alternative to restoring their territories and rights and bringing about a just peace by unifying their ranks and rising to the level of the challenges.

Just peace cannot be begged from Israel. Those who have begged for peace are now lost in the quagmire of Israeli humiliation. In order to achieve the goals of the peace process, Israel should apply the Security Council resolutions and withdraw from the occupied territories. This is the only way to achieve the desired peace.

Ministry Decision Allows Arab Nationals To Own Property

JN0301180595 Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 6 Dec 94 p 8

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus—The Interior Ministry has issued Decision No. 1,342/M under which Arab

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nationals are permitted to own real estate for the purposes of residence, work, or tourism within the town planning boundaries of the provincial capitals.

According to this decision, an Arab national can own property of up to 1,000 square meterswithin the town planning boundaries of a resort area and up to 5,000 square meters within the administrative boundaries of the area. The husband, wife, and their underage children are considered as one person.

Al-Shar' Receives Japanese Parliament Delegation

JN0401164395 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' has received a Japanese parliamentary delegation led by (Ishui Tanaka). The meeting was attended by Shakir Is'ayyid, head of the Arab and International Affairs Committee at the People's Assembly and Minoru Kubota, the Japanese ambassador in Damascus.

The minister received a message addressed to President Hafiz al- Asad from Japanese Prime Minister Murayama expressing Japan's desire to foster bilateral relations of cooperation and friendship in various fields.

The message also emphasizes Japan's support for a just and comprehensive peace in the region based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, premised on the Japanese Government's belief that peace will remain fragile and weak without Syria.

Talks dealt with the developments in the peace process in the region and bilateral relations of cooperation and friendship.

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Afghanistan

Government Captures 4 Dostam Generals in Sheberghan

LD0101184095 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 1 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] An attack by the Dostam militia in Sangcharak district in Sheberghan Province has been defeated, and four militia generals have been taken prisoner. Reports received by the BAKHTAR Information Agency say that following the failure of the plan of Malem Mohammad Achal, an associate of the Dostam militia, who wanted to hand over Sangcharak district to Dostam's men, heavy fighting broke out between Mohammad Rahim, general commander of the mojahedin of Sangcharak district, and Dostam's militia. As a result a large number of militia were killed and four Dostam generals were taken prisoner along with 40 militia. During the clash the mojahedin and the Islamic army forces captured five rocket launchers, five PK machineguns, eight jeeps, three trucks, and an assortment of ammunition.

Golboddin Commander, Followers Defect to Government

LD0101190695 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 1 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A commander of Golboddin and 50 of his men recently joined the Islamic army force in Nuristan province. A military correspondent of the BAKHTAR Information Agency reports: Realizing the righteousness of the Islamic state, Commander Amanollah, a famous commander of Golboddin's party in western Nuristan, and 50 of his men recently joined the mojahedin of the 591st Jihadi Brigade. These men, who have defected to the Islamic sovereignty, were received by the jihadi head of Nuristan province and officials of the province. They handed over various weapons including one BM1, one rocket launcher, three PK machineguns, and 42 Kalashnikovs. Another commander of Golboddin's party and 200 armed and unarmed men joined the Islamic sovereignty in Nuristan province the previous week.

Commentary Discusses Current Situation in Country

LD3112223894 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 31 Dec 94

[Commentary by Bakhtar political commentator]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The opponents of the Islamic state pronounced the 11 Jadi [1 January] coup d'etat to be mounted to topple the State of Afghanistan. But the Islamic State of Afghanistan called it a planned attempt from abroad to enslave the country. The political commentator of Bakhtar writes in this respect. In today's world, which will soon enter the 21st century, colonialism has completely changed. In the 19th century colonialism was in the shape of political subservience, but today economic subservience is the method to enslave nations. The 11 Jadi coup d'etat was planned for this purpose by the enemies of our country. The designers of this plan have come together in the so-called Coordination Council, and in full coordination they have embarked on the implementation of the aliens' plans. To prove this, it is sufficient to go through the grave political, socio-economic, and cultural impacts of the coup on the country.

Our country's economy was more dependent on agriculture. But in harmony with industrial development in all Third World countries, our country could also have produced more than 50 percent of the products it needed in the near future internally, in view of the establishment of industrial installations in various parts of our beloved country over the past 50 years. For instance, there were more than 400 private sector factories and dozens of state sector factories in Kabul. The Bagrami, Gozargah, and Janglak textile factories in Kabul and the textile factories of Herat, Kandahar, Pol-e Khomri, and Golbahar in other parts of the country represented great capital that was considered the hope of country's future. Similarly, the Baghlan sugar, the Mazar-e Sharif electricity and fertilizer, the Pol-e Khomri cement factories, and a gas and oil installation in the north had fundamental importance in the economy of the country. The fighting of the past two and a half years, which have been dubbed by the aliens a power struggle and internal differences, was in fact launched to realize the aliens' goals and was intensified by the opportunist foreigners. As a result, all private and state industrial installations in Kabul have been destroyed and [passage indistinct]. [passage omitted]

Every round of rocket barrages led to the emigration of a large number of wealthy people and industrialists, though the roots of this strategy reaches to the past. For example, some years before the victory of the Islamic revolution, one of the neighboring countries and a host of the Afghan refugees declared those capitalist and entrepreneur refugees who would want to stay in that country would be granted citizenship and would receive encouraging concessions. Now everything from the smallest to biggest necessary goods are imported from abroad, and our markets are full of other countries' industrial products . With the disappearance of [word indistinct] customs systems in the country, currency circulation has turned to a one-way movement which has obliged the government to continuously print money. This by itself can become a cause of monetary and economic problems. Other economic, commercial, transport, banking, and communication institutions, and, most important of all, the electricity institution, were also not safe from the damage of this war which [passage indistinct].

From the socio-political view, the remoteness of a number of provinces from the capital, the existence of

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two opposing radio and publication centers have had a destructive influence in destroying national unity and creating confusion in methods of thinking about our common home, Afghanistan, and the realization of its high interests. In case of their continuation and failure to take steps to stem their impact, they can have [word indistinct] results. [passage omitted]

Lack of interest in the return of the refugees and the continuation of the mojahedin offices' activities, and even the opening of new offices abroad, ostensibly to achieve group and political goals, in itself is another dangerous blow at the future of Afghan society. While central government exists in Afghanistan, the acceptance of the representatives of the opponents of the state and the entering of the ministers and ambassadors of foreign countries without permission and visas into the country and the establishment of links with the local amirs, is a sign of instability of the situation in the country and the efforts of the aliens to intensify and prolong this situation and to fish in this muddy water. [passage omitted]

It can be concluded from what was said above that in all fields the enemies of our nation, taking advantage of the ignorance of the opponents, are resorting to bringing about chaos and tension in the country in order to achieve their economic-strategic aims and to ensure the economic dependence of Afghanistan for many years in the future, and, by the 11 Jadi coup, they put into practice one of their most dangerous plans. Our nation should no more allow itself to be deceived by the hirelings and mercenaries of the aliens who in words speaks of the interests of the Islam but in practice have revolted against the jehad, Islam, and our national interests. What was briefly mentioned disclosed the contradiction between the words and acts of the opponents of the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

Bangladesh

Zia: Country To Be Run 'According to Constitution'

BK3012151894 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1430 GMT 30 Dec 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has laid the foundation stone for the Rupsa Bridge in Labanchara, about 7 km from Khulna town. [passage omitted]

Later, addressing a mammoth rally at the Rupsa ferry pier, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia said that in view of the resignation of the opposition parties from Parliament, the country will be run according to the Constitution. She said that no one will be allowed to create chaos in the country. She said that stern legal action will be taken against those creating obstacles to the process of development adopted by the present government. Referring to the lengthy process of negotiations with the opposition at various levels to overcome the political crisis, Begum Zia said that the opposition parties really do not believe in democracy. The prime minister said that two bills—one making the Election Commission more powerful to ensure smooth and impartial elections in the future and the other making arrangements to issue identity cards to voters—have been passed by Parliament. The prime minister warned that no one will be allowed to destroy democracy, which was realized after nine years of struggle against dictatorship.

Our Khulna correspondent reports that the rally was attended by Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali; Post and Telecommunication Minister Tariqul Islam; Foreign Minister A.S.M. Mustafizur Rahman; Communications Minister Oli Ahmed; Abdul Moin Khan, minister of state for planning; and Sheikh Tayyebur Rahman, Khulna city corporation mayor.

Pime Minister Zia Rules Out Early Elections

BK3112091094 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 31 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Bangladesh prime minister, Begum Khaleda Zia, has ruled out early general elections in the country. Speaking at a rally in Khulna yesterday, she warned of tough measures against her political opponents demanding immediate resignation of her government. She also rejected charges of opposition MP's that her government is illegal after most of them quit Parliament.

Meanwhile, the opposition groups have called for a three-day strike from the 3d of January in Dhaka to mount pressure on the government.

India

Reaction to U.S., EU Textile Accords Reported

Minister Welcomes Accords

BK0101163595 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 1 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India is to get a very substantial access to the American and European Community markets for its textile products. This follows two separate agreements signed with the Clinton administration and the European Commission in Washington yesterday. The agreements come into force with immediate effect. These are expected to give a fillip to the handloom and powerloom sectors, which generate employment. India on its part has agreed to a phased tariff liberalization and removal of restrictions on textile import over a period of three to seven years.

The Indo-U.S. accord frees cotton made-up's from quota restrictions. This category is dominated by handlooms. India will also get an additional 5 percent bonus quota for handloom pajamas and jeans jackets and 5 percent increase for yarn-dyed fabrics. Another salient feature is the increase in the limit on the export of more than 80 categories of yarn, fabrics, made-up's, and apparels. The

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limit has been hiked around by around 4 million square meters annually. India has also obtained increase in the base level for some other garment export categories like trousers and shirts. A significant improvement has been made in respect of terry cloth towels primarily produced by powerlooms.

Expressing his happiness over the agreement with the United States, the textiles minister, Mr. G. Venkat Swamy, said that all outstanding issues over the export of ghagras [skirts] have been resolved. A package for the special carry-forward facility has been worked out to increase the export of ladies' skirts. The new mechanism has been involved for better utilization of quotas for cotton sheeting, men's shirts, and dish towels, among other items. About the Indo-EC agreement, Mr. Venkat Swamy said the European Commission is removing all restraints on the export of handloom and cottage industry products with immediate effect.

America and European Union account for more than two-thirds of India's textile exports at present.

Samata Party Criticizes U.S. Accord

BK0201130095 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 2 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Samata Party has strongly criticized the Indo-U.S. agreement on textiles. The secretary general of the party, Mr. Harikishore Singh, said that the entry of American textiles in the Indian market will destroy the textile industry. Talking to newsmen, he called for convening a special parliamentary session to discuss the issue.

On the issue of espionage case, he demanded the setting up of a committee of Parliament to probe this.

Commentary Welcomes Accords

BK0201041995 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 2 Jan 95

[Commentary by D. Ravikant]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] 1995 augurs well for India's textile exports following the signing of two major bilateral agreements with the United States and the European Union [EU]. The government in one go secured substantial market access for textile exports, particularly for items made in the hand loom sector. The most beneficial aspect of these two agreements is the lifting of restrictions of hand loom made-up's and cottage industry products.

While Washington agreed to remove the restrictions on category C-690, which include hand loom and other made-up's, table linens [and] bath rugs, Brussels has gone a step further by agreeing to lifting restrictions with immediate effect in both hand loom and cottage industry products. This in itself is a major success given India's huge potential in the export of hand loom made-up's. The comparative advantage in these items is in India's favor. Further, New Delhi has ensured a 20 percent increase over its previous textile export quota. Thus the net benefit of these two agreements, though difficult to quantify at this juncture, would certainly run into a couple of thousands of crores.

The government in return has agreed to lift restrictions in a phased manner ranging from three to seven years on all textile imports from the U.S. and the EU. It will now submit its market access schedule to the World Trade Organization. However, this will not be applicable to apparel items which will continue to be in the negative list for the next five years. The government has committed to place all these items in open general license only in 2002.

It goes to the credit of India's textile negotiators who ensured that both these trade measures agreed on New Delhi's terms despite being dependent on their markets. For instance, the safeguard built into these two agreements are indeed commendable. The first safeguard stipulates that the two should fulfill their commitments in the integration process as spelt out in the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing, ATC, of the Uruguay Round. Should these two trade majors fail in their obligations, India reserves the right to revert to the tariff levels prevailing on 1 January, 1990. Second, it is the duty of both U.S. and the EU to ensure that the entry of low-priced and poor-quality textile products into India is discouraged. Thus, they have to ensure only goods of reasonable quality gain effective access in the years to come. This would certainly remove the possibility of flooding the Indian market by some emerging tigers.

Garment Exporters Welcome Accords

BK0201151595 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 2 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Garment exporters have welcomed the recent Indo-U.S. and Indo-EC textile agreement, saying that these would give a further boost to handloom and powerloom production and exporters. The Garment Exporters Association president, Mr. K.K. Jain, said the Indo-U.S. textile agreement has ensured that India's flourishing hand loom industry would not be governed by the quota regime. Speaking to reporters in New Delhi, Mr. Jain said the Indian negotiating team has done an excellent job in making the USA and EC agree to a phased tariff liberalization for garments.

Editorial Wants Clarification

BK0301135495 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 3 Jan 95 p 8

[Editorial: "Clarify the Deal"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The agreements signed by India with the US and the European Union (EU) in the vexed area of trade in textiles are certainly welcome to the extent that they represent steps in the direction of resolving the more contentious issues in the country's

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bilateral trade with these partners. The Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC) that formed part of the larger trade deal under the aegis of GATT was one that left the developing world, and India and Pakistan in particular, feeling dissatisfied. The agreed phasing out of the Multi-Fibre Arrangement (MFA) left much to be desired both in the timing of the process and its structure. The ATC also evoked strong negative responses from within the US textile industry, which also felt it had been given a raw deal. Given this dissatisfaction on both sides of the deal, a negotiated bilateral settlement was perhaps both inevitable and desirable. Sunday's agreements have served that purpose.

From the Indian point of view, though details are not yet fully available, some gains seem fairly clear. Reports suggest that in the United States alone, the agreement could mean lifting of 20 per cent of the total quotas imposed on Indian textile exports to that country. Considering that the GATT agreement demanded a phasing out of the MFA over a 10-year period, with close to half of it taking place in the final year, this is clearly an advantage gained by India. Though similar estimates of the magnitude of benefits in the European Union are not available it seems safe to assume that here too Indian exporters should be pleased. Also significant is the fact that gains are to come largely in exports of handloom and powerloom products, which are not only more employment-intensive than other segments of the textile industry, but could also do with a boost. This is not to suggest that other segments have nothing to gain from the agreement. The general increase in base levels of quotas for different categories will ensure that there is a bit for most.

On the flip side, unfortunately, there is hardly any concrete information available about exactly what India has had to offer to get these concession from the US and the EU. All that is clear is that the country has committed itself to a phased-out tariff reduction programme in respect of several textile products to ensure greater access for the US and the EU and that some non-tariff barriers will also have to go. What is not clear is just what these measures will mean in quantitative terms and whether these would have an adverse impact on domestic producers of these products and if so to what extent. Also, the tariff reduction programme will presumably benefit not just the US and the EU but other third country exporters of the same product as well. Answers to these questions and the extent to which the country will have to accelerate its declared policy of reducing import duties will need to be clearly spelt out by the Government before any meaningful evaluation of the deals can be made.

BJP 'Not Against' Strengthening of U.S. Ties

BK0201160595 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 2 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr. Murli Manohar Joshi, has said his party is not against strengthening of Indo-U.S. relations but it should not in any way weaken India's defense interests. Talking to PTI in New Delhi, he suggested that the government should not yield to any pressure during the coming visit of the U.S. defense secretary, Mr. William Perry.

Export Council Welcomes U.S. Decision To Extend GSP

BK3112090794 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 31 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Engineering Export Promotion Council has welcomed the U.S. decision to revise and extend the Generalized System of Preference [GSP] scheme till July next. The scheme was temporarily suspended three months ago. In a statement in New Delhi, the council said this will help in boosting exports to the American market.

Iran

Qatari Foreign Minister Pays Official Visit

Economic, Political Focus to Visit

LD0101121895 Tehran IRNA in English 1140 GMT 1 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 1, IRNA—Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabir al Thani, heading a politico-economic delegation arrived here Sunday [1 January] on a one-day official visit.

The Qatari foreign minister and his companions were greeted at the airport by Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and Minister of Energy, Bizhan Namdar Zanganeh.

Upon his arrival, he expressed pleasure with his presence in Iran and added that he was here to hold talks with Iranian President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Foreign Minister Velayati on major regional developments and on ways of expanding bilateral cooperation in political and economic areas.

Velayati, terming Iran's relations with Persian Gulf littoral states including Qatar as friendly, noted that in addition to diplomatic relations, economic ties between the two states should be promoted.

A project for providing drinking water for Qatar by the Islamic Republic of Iran would be among major topics to be discussed by Qatari and Iranian officials, Velayati underlined.

"The project has been agreed upon in principle for a long time and its blueprint has nearly been completed," the Iranian foreign minister said, adding that, the implementation of the project will be discussed by the energy ministers of the two countries.

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He expressed hope that the project would be finalized during the current visit to Tehran of the Qatari foreign minister.

"The implementation of the project would undoubtedly have positive political effects on not only both countries but also on the entire region," he said.

Referring to the special relations between Tehran and Doha, Velayati pointed out that the promotion of bilateral ties would have favorable effect on regional cooperation.

The Qatari foreign minister is to submit a message from Qatari Emir, Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad al Thani to President Rafsanjani today.

Talks Held With Velayati

LD0101124695 Tehran IRNA in English 1154 GMT 1 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 1, IRNA—Visiting Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabir al Thani and his Iranian counterpart 'Ali Akbar Velayati discussed Tehran-Doha cooperation in a meeting here Sunday [1 January].

The two sides discussed the transfer of drinking water to Qatar from Iran at the meeting which was also attended by Iran's Energy Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh. Referring to the close relations between Tehran and Doha, Velayati expressed hope that with talks between the energy ministers of the two countries on the implementation of the water project and negotiations between the Qatari foreign minister and Iranian officials, Iran and Qatar would take more practical steps towards mutual as well as regional cooperation.

Velayati termed the current visit of the Qatari foreign minister to Tehran as another move toward expansion of bilateral and regional relations.

Al Thani said that Qatar was keen on having full scale cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran especially in the water transfer project.

He said that his visit to Tehran has provided a suitable opportunity for talks with Iranian officials on the project.

Al Thani expressed hope that his visit would help practically enhance cooperation between the two countries.

Rafsanjani Praises Ties

LD0101152995 Tehran IRNA in English 1501 GMT 1 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 1, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here Sunday [1 January] received Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabir Al Thani, who was here heading a high ranking politico-economic delegation.

Al Thani conveyed a message from Qatari emir to Rafsanjani together with the best regards of Qatari heir apparent and emir to the government and people of Iran.

He voiced his respective government's willingness to expand its cooperation and relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Underlining "favourable" Tehran-Doha political relations, he said his country was also for raising the volume of commercial transactions, speedy implementation of a project to transfer Iran's drinking water to Qatar and for mutual cooperation.

He also called for exchange of expertise and technology between Qatar and Iran and expansion of naval cooperation between the two countries.

President Rafsanjani in return said that the bilateral cordial relations was a good example of the existence of positive and extensive areas for expansion of cooperation between Persian Gulf littoral states and Iran. He also underlined the necessity of deepening cooperation and friendship among regional countries.

He termed as "highly significant" for all the Persian Gulf region the implementation of joint projects by Iran and Qatar and an increase in bilateral cooperation and announced Tehran's readiness to transfer drinking water to Qatar, implement a joint gas project and cooperate with Doha in areas of mutual interest.

Ministers Visit Bushehr

LD0101164395 Tehran IRNA in English 1534 GMT 1 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Bushehr, 1 Jan (IRNA)—The Qatari ministers of interior, Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Khalifah Al Thani and of Economy and Trade, Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Khalifa Al Thani, arrived in this southern Iran port Sunday [1 January].

The two ministers, leading an eco-political delegation, will inspect the port's jetty facilities and industrial-marine companies.

The province's governor general, Abdulrahman Nadimi, welcoming the delegation, commented that exchange of ranking delegations between the two countries would reinforce mutual ties and make the qatari officials get familiar with the province's potentials to promote bilateral economic and trade cooperation.

News Conference Held

LD0101153595 Tehran IRNA in English 1513 GMT 1 Jan 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 1, IRNA—The Qatari Foreign Minister, Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabir Al Thani said here on Sunday [1 January] that all the states in the Persian Gulf region, including Iran and Iraq should restore solid and brotherly relations.

Speaking in a press conference at Mehrabad Airport at the end of his six-hour meeting with Iranian officials, Al

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Thani emphasized the need for holding frank negotiations in an atmosphere of understanding to resolve disputes between the states in the region and reaching a just solution.

He said that in light of the historical bonds between the regional states, they should resolve their differences by avoiding interference in one another's internal affairs.

He said that he put forward the views of his government to President Rafsanjani and conveyed a message from Qatar's amir to the Iranian president.

On Qatar's territorial dispute with Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, he said that Qatar-Bahrain dispute will be carried to the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

Shaykh Hamad Al Thani said that the Qatar-Saudi dispute will be resolved through mutual negotiations in view of the good intention showed by the Saudis.

Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati who was also present at the airport to see off his Qatari counterpart, said the talks between Iran and Qatar were useful and constructive.

He said in the two rounds of talks with Al Thani, they exchanged views on regional issues and those of the world of Islam as well as the ways to expand mutual cooperation.

He said that issues such as trade exchange, banking cooperation, and a plan to launch a joint venture for transfer of Iranian gas to Pakistan, were in the agenda of his talks with the Qatari foreign minister.

Al Thani wound up his visit to Tehran and left here later Sunday.

Ruhani Meets With Visiting Georgian Parliamentarian

Views Russian Action Toward Chechnya

LD0301141995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Expansion of cultural, economic, political, and parliamentary relations was emphasized at a meeting between our country's Majles deputy speaker [Hasan Ruhani] and the deputy speaker of parliament of the Republic of Georgia.

At the meeting, Deputy Speaker Mr. Ruhani, who is also secretary of the Supreme National Security council, expressed regret at the situation in Chechnya. He said: In our opinion, Russia has not acted wisely toward Chechnya, especially if we consider that many civilian lives have been lost in this war. He hoped that the war would end as soon as possible, enabling people to return to their homes. Mr. Vakhtang Goguadze, Georgia's deputy speaker of parliament, said for his part: The people of Iran and Georgia—taking note of the many factors they share in common—could achieve extensive cooperation between their two countries.

Says Government Ready To Mediate in Chechnya

LD0401121595 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Today Mr. Nateq-Nuri, speaker of the Islamic Consultative Majles, received Vakhtang Goguadze, deputy chairman of the Republic of Georgia's parliament. At this meeting, the former expressed sorrow over the conflict in Chechnya and announced the Islamic Republic of Iran's readiness to send a delegation to mediate between the warring parties in Chechnya.

The speaker of the Islamic Consultative Majles also spoke of the historic cultural ties between Iran and Georgia, saying: Following the disintegration of the former Soviet Union and the lifting of the iron curtain between the peoples of Iran and Georgia, we should counter the effects of the vacuum created in the relations between the two countries in previous years through the expansion of relations in various fields.

He stressed the need for the Iran-Georgia parliamentary friendship group to become more active and said: The parliaments of the two countries can assist the countries' statesmen in expanding bilateral relations. They can also exchange their legislative experiences.

For his part the deputy chairman of the Georgian parliament spoke about the clashes in the Caucasus, saying: War and bloodshed in Chechnya is a source of concern and sorrow for us. We believe the conflict in the Caucasus can be solved through the active and positive involvement of the countries of the region, neighboring countries and through talks. [passage omitted]

Russia, Ukraine Trade Declines Due to Chechnya

LD0301150195 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1300 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The export of goods through the Astara border crossing has declined. In the wake of the recent fighting in the autonomous Republic of Chechnya and the closure of the border between Russia and Azerbaijan, there has been a sharp decline in the amount of goods exported through the land border at Astara. The representative in Astara of the syndicate of Iran's international transport companies said yesterday: Due to the fact that the border between Russia and the Republic of Azerbaijan has been closed at Dagestan, most of the Iranian trucks which were loaded with goods headed for Russia and Ukraine during the past 20 days have returned to the country without delivering their goods. He added: Dozens of Iranian trucks have also been forced to unload their spoiled goods.

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Editorials View Situation in Chechnya

Yeltsin's Stand Criticized

NC3012104194 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 25 Dec 94 p 2

[Editorial: "Stop the Russian Cyclops in Chechnya"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The massacre of Chechnya's Muslims continues while the international community and Western powers are keeping mum on the atrocities committed by the Russians. By their silence, Western circles are trying to make it appear that Chechnya's problems are the internal problems of the Russian Federation. For example, the European Union has only condemned the bombing of Chechnya's capital of Groznyy.

The Western media too is doing its best to make this look like an internal problem, which is a violation of their journalistic code of ethics and against the ideal of self-determination which the Westerners espouse in their civil and human rights. In their reporting of the events in Groznyy, they have also tried to sanction the heinous crimes of Russians in the Caucasus.

Despite these white lies by the Western media, the reports coming from Chechnya say that the circle of the crisis is widening in the Caucasus. The warlike Muslim people of the Caucasus are staunchly opposed to the Russian adventurism in their land. Some of the members of the Russian Duma, lower house, have admitted that, even though the crisis in Chechnya was initially viewed an international problem, it no longer is.

It is clear that the Chechnya crisis will lead to other crises in the region and may engulf the whole Caucasus. The Russian invasion of Chechnya has boded well for the solidarity of the Caucasian Muslims. All the Muslim peoples in the Caucasus have strong sympathies with the people of Chechnya, among them one can mention the peoples of Dagestan, Ingushetia, Ossetia and Abkhazia. The government of Georgia has taken measures to stop the flow of Abkhaz fighters who want to fight alongside the people of Chechnya.

The Russian border with Azerbaijan has also been closed because the Azeri people have objected to the bloody invasion of Chechnya. The Muslims in the Caucasus are united in their sentiment against Russia because they ask themselves: "If today is Chechnya's turn to be victimized, whose turn will it be tomorrow?"

Russia has unwittingly contributed to the now visible strength of the Islamic movement in the Caucasus because, prior to their invasion of Chechnya. The sense of Islamic solidarity was not so strong in the region.

Yeltsin's intransigent approach to the crisis has only meant division and lack of unity within Russia. The Russian Duma, the government and the army seem to be at odds in finding a way to resolve the crisis in Chechnya. The Russians should know that if their atrocities continue, the crisis will only widen. Western governments too should be cautious in supporting Russia's police action in Chechnya because if Russia succeeds in breaking the will of the people of Chechnya, it might be emboldened to take on any European county that happens to oppose Russia's grand plan to re-establish Czarist empire.

In attacking Chechnya, Russia has shown that, under Yeltsin, it cannot exercise diplomacy and will use brute force to achieve its ends. Like a cyclops that has one eye, Russia has one eye and that eye is set on the prized resources of its southern neighbors. The Islamic counties must act now. They must take measures to stop the Russian cyclops in its track now before it is too late.

Western 'Silence' Termed Hypocritical

LD0101133795 Tehran IRNA in English 1313 GMT 1 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 1, IRNA—The English daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' here Sunday editorialized on the Western governments' keeping mum on the Russian invasion of Chechnya under the pretext that Russian atrocities in Chechnya were internal problems. It wrote that in so doing the Western policy on ignoring the plight of Chechens was also coming under fire from human rights activists.

The daily's editorial further said that "if we change Russia to any country with which the West does not get along, if we change Yeltsin to any leader against whom the West holds a grudge, we will see a different reaction."

"The U.S. and other Western governments have cautiously commented on Russia's brutal suppression of the Chechen independence government. The amoral pursuit of Western interest has led these governments to support Yeltsin at any cost because they want to pay him back for his efforts to destroy the "evil empire". One should not forget the fact that the rise of Yeltsin to power was aided and abetted by the U.S."

Saying that the West should realize that Russia, under Yeltsin, to quote Yelena Bonner, was "reverting to totalitarianism", the 'TEHRAN TIMES' concluded by writing that "the West has decided to support Russia's latter-day czar, Boris Yeltsin. This support is against the human rights which Western governments are always too glad to champion if it is against a government they happen to dislike. The sinister policy of hushing the human rights abuses of friends, while denouncing those of their enemies, points to the hypocritical nature of the West."

Motives for West's Reaction Seen

LD0101154995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1105 GMT 1 Jan 95

[Unattributed commentary]

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[FBIS Translated Text] At the same time as the Russian defense minister admitted that the armed and popular forces of the Muslim-inhabited Republic of Chechnya were resisting the Russian Army, Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev called for a cease-fire. In a message to Russian President Boris Yeltsin, Dudayev proposed a cease-fire be established in Chechnya on the occasion of the new Christian year, and to prevent further casualties and destruction. Dudayev also stressed the need for the withdrawal of the Russian Army from Chechen soil. He declared his readiness for peace talks with the Russian authorities on the condition that the question of Chechen disarmament is not raised in the talks at all.

That is when the Russian Government, rejecting a proposal for talks with Chechen leaders, stressed the need for the continuation of military operations and furthering the process of imposing Russian political sovereignty in that republic. Moscow's stance, which in reality is a continuation of that country's past policy, means that Kremlin intends to somehow end the present crisis. Inside regional viewpoints regarding military and political developments in Chechnya, events are coming to pass under circumstances where the West and America still keep silent in the face of the Russian military action. The West, particularly America, which since the disintegration of the Soviet Union's Communist system has always welcomed the trend of dismemberment of the former Soviet republics—especially the independence of smaller republics such as Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania—is following the trend of cessationist developments of Muslim-inhabited Caucasian republics with less sensitivity.

Essentially, America and the West oppose any calls for independence in Russia's Asian regions for two main reasons. First, the West is concerned that Russia may disintegrate to newer sections that might take control of the situation out of Russian hands completely. From the West's viewpoint the existence of a powerful Russia as a force which maintains the political and security stability of the region is an unavoidable necessity.

Second, the independence of republics such as Chechnya will speed up the revival of the national and Islamic identity of the region; and that is when the West is worried about the proliferation of fundamentalism in the Caucasus. As the exalted leader of the revolution [Khamene'i] said in his remarks yesterday, the West's silence in the face of the violation of the rights the Bosnian Palestine, and Chechnya Muslims is clear proof of their enmity toward Islam. That is why the West and America are not seeking to recognize the independence struggle of the Muslim people of Chechnya at all.

Anyhow, under the circumstances where Muslim Chechens try to turn the war with Russia into a struggle by Caucasia against Russia, there is concern that the region's political security may once again succumb to unavoidable developments that will not benefit any of the involved parties in the region.

'Brutal Suppression' of Muslims Condemned

LD0301102095 Tehran IRNA in English 0959 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 3, IRNA—The Iranian print media in a statement condemned brutal suppression of Muslim Chechens by the Russian forces and protested the silence adopted by the West, the so-called advocate of human rights.

Praising the firm determination of Muslim people of Chechnya, the statement, titled "Chechnya not to be suppressed", called on international communities to pledge solidarity with the Muslim people of Chechnya.

The statement, released by a large number of widely-circulated Iranian print media, referred to Chechnya as a member of the Islamic world.

It further noted that Chechnya was under the heavy fire of the Russians, adding that the aggression against the 1.2 million republic was in fact an assault against the world conscience.

The indifferent attitude of the West vis-a-vis brutal suppression of Chechnya was only due to Russian President Boris Yeltsin's intention to prevent spread of Islamic movement, added the statement.

But, it warned, the West should know well that Chechnya would become another Afghanistan for Yeltsin.

It condemned the tragic suppression of Chechen Muslims and called on international communities to pledge solidarity with Muslim people of Chechnya.

Daily Assails 'Assaults on Muslim Identity'

LD0401110495 Tehran IRNA in English 0936 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Jan. 4, IRNA—The invasion of Chechnya is in fact one out of many other military assaults on Muslim identity and power, wrote a morning daily here Wednesday [4 January]. "The body of the Islamic umma is still reeling from the pains of the wounds it has received in Bosnia, Azerbaijan, Palestine, Lebanon and Iraq," said TEHRAN TIMES in its editorial.

Stressing that Muslims are not just fighting on military fronts, the article noted that Muslim combatants are also busy guarding the faith and the faithful from external assaults in political, military, economic and cultural fronts as well. On the economic front, it said, Muslims have to fight the economic imperialism of western countries and their stooges in Muslim-populated areas.

"The Islamic world is also under constant cultural bombardment of the west. The Muslim world has its own cultural identity...this conspicious identity has always been an obstacle on the path of westernization of Muslim nations."

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However, the daily stressed, despite such all-out assaults, Muslims are showing signs of resistance and as forms of resistance to western domination is changing, the powers of the world will try to change their methods of subjugation.

"Considering that the west is so adept at using the mass media, at manipulating the facts and forming the public opinion, Muslims should be on guard to come up with publicity combatants who are as versatile and clever in their trade as the Chechen fighters are in their fighting in the streets of Groznyy."

The article concluded by calling on world Muslims to remain vigilant and strong in all the said fronts, adding that opening one front to the enemies would mean subsequent defeats in other fronts.

Chechnya Crisis Analyzed

NC3112192294 Tehran SALAM in Persian 25 Dec 94 p 12

[Commentary by M. Veysi: "The Chechen Crisis and Us"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Russia's military attack on the Republic of Chechnya and its efforts to topple the Dudayev government can perhaps be considered the most important issue being discussed in the international political news circles of the world and the region.

There is no doubt that this crisis, like all other political phenomena is the result of numerous factors and causes. In the current circumstances this crisis can be assessed from various perspectives. The reason for Russia's attack and the other hypotheses about this battle—the nature of the current Chechen regime, the international implications of the crisis, including the stances of the Western, Islamic, and regional countries, and ultimately the Islamic Republic of Iran—all these are factors that can be considered in this regard.

It appears that one of the important reasons for the Russian attack on Chechnya is to prevent the proliferation of the spread of secessionism among the 89 other components of the Russian Federation. Moscow's officialdom is well aware that the bitter experience of the dissolution of the former Soviet Union in Gorbachev's era can be repeated in the Russian Federation at a lower level given the slightest of laxity or negligence on their part. Yeltsin, who endured this experience at close quarters at the time of the dissolution of the Soviet Union will try to avoid suffering Gorbachev's fate.

If we adopt this hypothesis, then the harsh and severe approach to the members of the Russian Federation who are seeking to secede seems necessary; and it does not apply to Chechnya alone, because the Kremlin will not tolerate such actions in the future. Against this backdrop, it is clear the current attack on Chechnya could have been aimed at any part of the Russian Federation and it just happened to be Chechnya's bad luck that it has to be the example to teach the others.

Another theory sees the Russian attack against Chechnya from the economic viewpoint. From the point of view of the Groznyy regime and of Dudayev himself, the region is oil-rich and the oil and gas pipelines from most of the Central Asian republics pass through this region by way of the Caspian Sea. So Russian avarice for the financial and economic rights of the people Chechnya can be considered one of the causes for the Russian attack.

It appears that the Groznyy officials are well aware of the importance of this factor. The dependence on Moscow of the economies of all the republics of the former Soviet Union is very clear, and Chechnya's economic interests as a member of the Russian Federation did not merit creating such a major regional crisis for the Russians. In addition, the Russians consider the economic interests of Chechnya as the prerogative of their own government; and there have been no serious steps that could result Dudayev cutting off this revenue for Russia.

Another angle from which one can view the Chechen problem is the international fallout of the crisis, and the reaction of other countries. The Western countries and the United States in particular—in view of the international balance of power—have pronounced the Chechnya issue an internal affair and have rejected Dudayev's requests for help. From the U.S. point of view, the dissolution of the former Soviet Union, its dismemberment into 15 small and large countries, and the elimination of a rival superpower is considered a very positive development.

However, in the current situation, they are not in favor of the further disintegration of the Russian Federation. This is because despite the signing of nuclear accords with Kazakhstan and Ukraine, the Western powers consider Russia a potent nuclear power and are not prepared to accept the risk [preceding word in English] of chaos arising in the management of these weapons. On the other hand, the policy of undermining Russia is followed only to the extent of keeping Russia at the level of a regional power so that while ensuring the stability of the region, other new and unidentified powers can be prevented fro seeking power at the regional level.

Thus, with such a stance by the West and the United States, it is natural that Dudayev should seek other allies; and the most important potential source of assistance from his viewpoint is the Islamic world, as there are positive grounds for such support from Muslim public opinion. It is an undisputable fact that a large segment of the population of Chechnya and the Caucasus is comprised of Muslims who have great animosity toward the Kremlin for two reasons: Historically the Muslims of this region have constantly been the victims of the domineering tendencies of the Russians and Russian rulers, of which the struggles of Sheykh Shamil of Dagestan is a conspicuous example.

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On the other hand, the ideological problems of communism in the course of the 70 years of Russian domination merely served to consolidate these tendencies. In current circumstances with the decline of communism, the Muslims of this region are seeking to liberate themselves from this historical and nationalistic domination of the Russians. In order to attain this, they are using the two levers of Islamism and nationalism against the Russians, as they were formerly used against themselves.

Despite this, it is significant that one must separate the Chechen people's Islamic nature from the objectives of their leaders. The fact is that the current leaders, including Dudayev, have been accused of things which have not been fully proved or refuted. The Russians have accused Dudayev and his ruling party of smuggling drugs, nuclear raw materials, and extensive criminal activity in the region. It is difficult to prove or disprove this in view of the unreliability of news and information in Russia, which is an unfortunate legacy of the former police regime. However, it may be deduced that Dudayev and Yeltsin are both fishing in troubled waters and trying to use the issue for their benefit. Dudayev is seeking to play on the religious sensitivities of the Chechen people. If successful he will seek to expand this approach to the neighboring Muslim countries. Yeltsin and the Kremlin officials are also seeking to undermine Dudayev's position with accusations that will turn the Russians and the people of the world against Chechnya so that Moscow can suppress all other potential secessionist tendencies all over the country.

Accordingly, dragging the Islamic countries into the crisis can be considered a very crafty move on the part of Dudayev. He does this by drawing analogies with the Soviet aggression against Afghanistan; this is the best example of the mode of thought of the officials of Groznyy.

The fact is that even though the majority of the Chechen population are Muslims and even though such savage and unacceptable attacks by the Red Army on residential areas—which have resulted in the killing and wounding of innocent civilians—are to be condemned, the reaping of political and ideological capital by Dudayev is also worth mulling over.

Thus, the issue of the assistance by the Islamic world to the "Dudayev government" and the "oppressed Chechen nation" should be considered as two different things. This is because before the attack by the Russians, there was no outward or serious manifestation of Islamic tendencies among the Chechen rulers. The rulers of the former Soviet republics acted similarly, in that as soon as they faced political danger they seized on the concept of Islamic ideology and the Islamic world without them previously acting in clear defense of Islamic tenets or for the propagation of these tenets in their respective domains.

In view of what has transpired, what should the Islamic Republic of Iran's stance be with regard to this crisis? Support for Dudayev? Condemnation of the Russian attacks against the Muslim people of Chechnya or... ? [ellipsis as published] Whatever the decision, it is bound to have varied results. Some factors will affect such decisions:

Among these factors are the fact that the people of Chechnya are Muslim, the geographic proximity of the crisis to our land and sea borders, the nature of the Chechen leaders, Iran's economic interests in the Caspian Sea, particularly the issue of oil and gas in the region, and the strategic relations between Tehran and Moscow. In view of the unclear nature of the Chechen rulers and their future objectives in the region and the rumors about them, the benefits of categorically assisting the Groznyy administration seem nebulous. On the other hand, silence in the face of the massacre of the Chechen Muslims by the Russians also seems inappropriate. It is certain however that support for the Chechen administration will certainly have concomitant repercussions on relations with Moscow.

In view of the above factors and the existing information, the choices for any initial maneuvers in our foreign policy toward this crisis should be clearly delineated as follows: Sympathy with the oppressed Muslim nation of Chechnya; asking Moscow to refrain from military attacks on residential areas and from killing civilians; trying to learn more about the orientation of the current rulers in Chechnya and their objectives; and finally seeking ways and means for political and diplomatic solutions rather than the military option.

Commentary Views Palestinian-Israeli Talks

NC0401112695 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 4 Jan 95

[Commentary by News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] The talks between representatives of 'Arafat's Palestinian government and the Zionist regime in Cairo for the implementation of other articles in the Gaza-Jericho self-rule accord reached a deadlock. The failure of these talks and other incidents, such as the killing of three members of 'Arafat's police force by Israeli soldiers and the attempt by the regime occupying Jerusalem to expand its settlements around Bethlehem, show that it is continuing its expansionist policies and that it is not being faithful at all to the agreement on 'Arafat's rule in a small part of Palestine.

On the basis of the Gaza-Jericho self-rule accord, the Zionist regime was to militarily withdraw from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip a few months after the signing of the accord to allow elections with international supervision and Palestinians in the occupied territories to cast a vote on their future. Despite the year that has passed since the Gaza-Jericho compromise accord, the Zionist

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regime is refusing to meet this commitment using the excuse of security problems.

Also, on the basis of the compromise deal between 'Arafat and Tel Aviv, the Zionist regime was to completely abandon its policy of building settlements and housing Zionist immigrants on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. But the Zionist regime continues this policy. The opposition from the Zionist officials to the expansion of one of the Zionist settlements on the West Bank and their simultaneous agreement with the creation of another settlement near Bethlehem do not alter the nature of such expansionist policies.

In summing up, it can be said that Israel's sham wish for peace with the Arabs and, at the same time, the refusal by this usurper regime to implement the so-called peace pacts that it signed with the Arabs show that peace in the true sense has never been its objective and that this illegitimate regime considers peace only as an instrument to fulfill its expansionist objectives.

In other words, the major objective in the Zionist regime's new strategy is the expansion of economic domination. This regime is trying to remove the obstacles in the way of this objective by signing and not implementing the so-called peace agreements.

FIS 'Threat' Against Embassies Noted

NC0401121595 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 4 Jan 95

[Commentary by News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] During the past few days, dozens more Algerian Muslim combatants have been martyred by the Algerian security forces. Algerian state sources have said that 23 of them have been killed. However, reports by foreign correspondents based in the country speak of a much larger number.

Meanwhile, news agencies have reported that the Algerian Muslim combatants have given five Western countries until Saturday [7 January] to close down their embassies in Algiers. Emphasizing that the coupist regime lacks support at home, the Algerian Islamists consider the Western countries' support to be the major reason for the continued rule of the regime and demand that these countries sever their political, military, and economic support for it.

The military branch of the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front [FIS], which was dissolved by the coupists in 1991 after winning in the first round of the parliamentary elections, recently published a statement declaring war against French interests in Algerian territory. In this statement, the FIS Army points to France's role as one of the sides in the battle between the Algerian military regime and Islamists. It states that it does not intend to transfer the war to French territory, but that it considers attacks on the interests of France, which places all types of financial and arms assistance at the disposal of the Algerian regime, to be a canonical duty.

The Algerian civil war, which started three years ago after the abrogation of the results of the parliamentary elections by the military regime, has adopted an unprecedented dimension in the past three months. But the Algerian Islamists, who had disregarded their victory in the past round of elections in a bid to avert bloodshed and had announced their readiness for talks with the military, became disillusioned with the ruling statesmen's lack of goodwill. In answer to the intensification of the people's suppression, they had no alternative but to resume their armed operations.

Within this context, some combatant Algerian groups made the interests of Western countries their target. Their recent threat against the Western embassies in Algeria is their most serious reaction to the continuation of the West's policies on Algeria. Most Western countries have taken this threat seriously. But it is not yet clear how this will affect them in changing their policies.

Pakistan

President Leghari on Perry Visit, Other Issues

BK2912141894 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 29 Dec 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has said the government is taking necessary measures to improve the law and order situation in Karachi. These include the prime minister's meetings with the major political parties and people in Karachi, implementation of the Karachi package, and administrative measures of the Sindh government to bring normalcy. Talking to newsmen in Peshawar today, he said it is the basic responsibility of the government to firmly check violence and to protect the life and property of the people. The president made it clear that it had been the consistent policy of the past and the present governments that the cases of heinous crimes would not be withdrawn. All those involved in these cases would have to go through the process of law.

About the U.S. defense secretary's visit to Pakistan, the president said it has nothing to do with the nuclear policy of Pakistan. The president also dispelled the impression that the government-opposition dialogue are being held under pressure from some quarters. The present government, he said, has the mandate of the masses, by virtue of which it can take any decision independently.

When questioned whether he would play any role in a rapprochement between the government and the opposition, the president said he would play his constitutional role because he wanted to see peace and development in Pakistan.

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Further Comments

BK3012130494 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 30 Dec 94 pp 1, 5

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Peshawar, Dec 29—President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has said that forthcoming visit of the US Secretary of Defence to Pakistan was in no way linked with the country's nuclear programme nor it was part of the agenda as William Perry did not even deal with the issue. He, however, added that there was no bar on discussing any point.

With his predecessor Ghulam Ishaq Khan on his right, he was informally talking to the media at a luncheon hosted by Chief Minister Aftab Ahmad Sherpao at a hotel here Thursday [29 December].

The President explained that the visit of the Defence Secretary was part of the maturing relationship between Pakistan and United States and it should in no way be taken as something against the interests of the country. He described as ridiculous the impression being created by certain quarters that Pakistan's interests were being jeopardised and any part of the national soil was being handed over to the American. Gwadar, he said, was an important part of the country and it was simply unthinkable to part with even an inch of our land. The country's interests could in no way be compromised, the President added.

Replying to a question he said that Pakistan's position with regard to the situation in Afghanistan has been very clear that it wanted peace in the war-torn country and for this purpose it has been persuading the major Afghan groups to thrash out their differences amicably. Pakistan, he said, was not trying to impose any solution on the Afghans nor was it playing the role of the big brother as that would amount to interfering in the domestic affairs of that country. The Afghans, he said, were grateful for Pakistan's key role in realising the Soviet withdrawal from their soil and they had obviously developed a very cordial gesture for this country which the Indians would like to vanish. He, however, believed, that the Afghans should be able to see through such decisions. He categorically ruled out domineering attitude being adopted by Pakistan in respect of the neighbouring country.

President Leghari hoped that the closure of the Indian Consulate in Karachi along with other measures should greatly help improve the law and order situation there.

Asked if he would like to play the role of a peace-maker between the government and the Opposition, he said "I would be too glad if I can play any role in defusing the tension between the government and the Opposition and my doors are open to all segments of the society, both in and outside the Parliament." People, he said, had the right to have an access to the President. The Opposition, he pointed out, could also pursue its views on national issues at different democratic fora available in the country.

Asked about the Prime Minister's visit to Karachi in her bid to restore peace, the President observed that it was an important step in the right direction and should help achieve the desired results. The Sindh government, he said, had already been taking a number of steps to cure the violent tendencies in the provincial capital. The Prime Minister's visit and her efforts to resolve the critical situation through a dialogue and other administrative measures should be much more effective in yielding good and quicker results in Karachi, he said.

It was good that the government and the major parties were talking to each other suggesting that they were equally keen for the restoration of calm and peace in Karachi and this political dialogue backed by other measures, he said, should be very fruitful. He, however, added that there was no question of withdrawing the cases of heinous crimes wherein the law will take it own course. [passage omitted]

Leghari, Jamaat Leader Discuss Anti-U.S Protest

BK2912090894 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 29 Dec 94 p 12

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Dec 28—In a bid to dissuade the Jamaat-i-Islami [JI] from arranging the protest demonstrations in protest against the forthcoming visit of the US delegation in the first week of January, President Farooq Ahmad Leghari held a meeting with the Jamaat leader Senator Prof Khurshid Ahmad at Aiwan-e-Sadr [presidential palace] here on Wednesday [28 December].

Highly placed sources confided to THE MUSLIM that during the hour-long meeting President Farooq Ahmad Leghari reportedly assured the JI leader that Pakistan government had no intention of signing the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty (NPT) unilaterally and the doubts of JI leaders in this regard were incorrect.

Sources said the President urged Senator Khurshid to persuade the high command of his party to abandon plans to take our a [as published] procession to protest the arrival of US delegation on Jan 6, 1995.

Earlier, Khurshid Ahmad held an important meeting with JI Chief Qazi Hussain Ahmad in Lahore on Tuesday. Qazi Sahib had specially flown from Faisalabad to Lahore to meet Prof Khurshid.

Former Secretaries Foreign Affairs Agha Shahi and Abdul Sattar also held meeting with Qazi Hussain Ahmad.

Maleeha Lodhi, Pakistan Ambassador to the US, also called on the president today. The President discussed with the ambassador Pak-US relations, particularly with reference to the country's nuclear policy and Kashmir issue.

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Editorials on Defense Secretary Perry's Visit

THE NEWS Seeks To Dampen 'Euphoria'

BK3012105394 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 30 Dec 94 p 7

[Editorial: "Perry's visit: hope and reality"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There is a surprising touch of euphoria in the country that Pakistan's till now frozen relations with the United States have thawed to an extent that the American Defence Secretary William Perry's visit is being looked forward to with hope. Apart from the obvious satisfaction of having a value-added visitor, the government, for unexplained reasons, is expecting that something tangible will emerge from the talks. While this is a desired objective, the ground realities suggest otherwise as nothing has happened in recent times to bring the two sides closer to each other on certain key questions.

In fact, the weekly reiteration of Pakistan's known views on the nuclear, Kashmir and regional issues, leave hardly any room for optimism about something fruitful to emerge from the visit. Washington too has not indicated by word of mouth or sign that it has changed its policy towards Pakistan for the better. Even if the odious Pressler amendment is ignored in deference to the seasonal good cheer and because of the US officials' efforts to scuttle it, it is quite unlikely that Mr Perry will be able to go much beyond the stratified American position.

Both sides are more or less firm on certain core issues they interact on by necessity, as the kernel of US interest remains its objective of weaning Pakistan away from its suspect nuclear ambition. The other is Kashmir, for which Washington has possibly worked out several options, none of which have received more than a passing glance from Islamabad. The furthest that Pakistan has gone was to admit to capping its nuclear programme, whatever it implied in the related jargon as different from what was generally presumed. Despite this 'concession', the US has not resiled from its demand to scrap the nuclear programme as a prerequisite for any progress in improving the relations. The visits by several American teams in recent times were largely involved with business and investment and possibly were meant to charm Islamabad into succumbing to American financial allure.

The situation has nothing in it to suggest a dramatic breakthrough during Mr Perry's visit. The F-16s may seem a lost cause, but it is unlikely that America will easily dump an important trump it holds which still has the capacity to marginally influence Pakistani thinking. Our leaders' excessive concern in keeping on the right side of America is one factor that has done much to bolster its optimism about keeping Pakistan in tow while getting it to forego its nuclear option. It is time Islamabad corrected this perception and made it clear to the American visitor of the need for dealing with Pak-US relations within a new format, rather than relying on the existing unequal linkage. The Pressler law and much else are infractions that should be removed if it is desired to stabilise relations between the two nations.

JANG Urges 'Self-Confidence' in Talks

BK3012130994 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 30 Dec 94 p 3

[Editorial: "Pakistan-U.S. Relations—The Need To Adopt a Categorical and Clear-Cut Stand"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said that the U.S. Government has adopted a more equitable approach toward Pakistan and India than in the past. We welcome this, but we want the United States to play a more active role in the Kashmir dispute and to exert pressure on India so that a just solution can be found. The prime minister said it has been the avowed stand of the United States to adopt a just and equitable policy in relation to Pakistan and India. This is not possible, however, until the United States clearly takes the side of justice and fair play and endeavors to settle the dispute, which is causing tension between the two countries. The prime minister said this during an interview with a Sri Lankan English daily.

Meanwhile, as the visit to Pakistan by U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry draws closer, speculation is rising about the implications and outcome of his visit. This comes even though the government has made it clear on a number of occasions that no agreement will be concluded with the U.S. defense secretary that contradicts Pakistan's interests. In particular, there will definitely not be any discussions with him regarding Pakistan's nuclear program.

In an interview the other day, Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali said there is no possibility of holding any talks on the physical or nonphysical inspection of Pakistan's nuclear program. The president recently held talks with Maliha Lodhi, Pakistan's ambassador to the United States, on the latest situation with Pakistan-U.S. relations. The talks were held in connection with the preparations to devise Pakistan's position for the talks with the U.S. defense secretary.

Meanwhile, Qazi Hussain Ahmad, chief of the Jamaat-i-Islami, has alleged that Pakistan's vital interests will be compromised during the U.S. defense secretary's visit to Pakistan. Qazi Hussain Ahmad is a responsible leader, but he has made an unjustified and unsubstantiated allegation on an extremely serious issue. Unfortunately, some other opposition figures are also issuing statements that do not have any justification and are not in the interests of the country. As the government has already made it clear that it will not allow Pakistan's vital interests to be affected during the talks with the U.S. defense secretary, there is no justification for baseless speculation in various quarters.

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We feel it is appropriate to ask the government not only to refuse to compromise on Pakistan's vital interests during the defense secretary's visit, but also to convey to the United States in categorical and clamorous terms that Pakistan is not satisfied with the present U.S. posture. Pakistan feels that the attempts being made to deprive it of economic and military aid by applying the Pressler Amendment do not conform to the needs of justice. Pakistan is being denied F-16 planes for which it has already made payment. This is just extremism.

William Perry's visit will be the most significant of all the visits to Pakistan by U.S. leaders over the past six years. Of course Hazel O'Leary's visit was also important. In view of the prolonged history of economic and defense cooperation between Pakistan and the United States, however, the U.S. defense secretary's visit can be considered to be of extraordinary importance. The Pakistani Government will be considered successful in its diplomacy if it succeeds not only in safeguarding its national interests but in changing the unjust U.S. position on South Asia and Pakistan as well.

The Pakistani Government should conduct talks with the U.S. defense secretary with self-confidence and courage. The Pakistani nation wholeheartedly supports the government on this issue and will support any strategy the government adopts to safeguard its national interests. We hope that the U.S. defense secretary's visit will bring about a positive change in Pakistan-U.S. relations. If this is achieved, not only will the country's interests be secured, but the doubts and misgivings created by the opposition will also be removed.

Edtiorial on 'Unwelcome Visitor'

BK3112094994 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN OBSERVER in English 31 Dec 94 p 6

[Editorial: "Don't Bother To Come, Perry"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The forthcoming visit of US Defence Secretary to Pakistan has caused a lot of controversy and widespread unease across the country. Although the leaders of the government have categorically denied that any compromise on the nuclear issue will be offered or any part of Pakistan will be handed over to a foreign country. We still feel that the visit is ill-timed, unnecessary and will cause more harm than good. Unfortunately, those living in the corridors of power have no idea of the depth of anti-American sentiments among Pakistani citizens. Members of government have often ignored the loud and clear signals indicating that parting of ways have occurred between US and Pakistan. Every now and then they issue soothing statements that the US Administration now better understands the position of Pakistan on nuclear issue, defence and security matters in South Asia and other subjects of mutual interest. They never bother to find out if the people of this country are at all interested in improving relations with a country which has emerged as its enemy number one as well as the chief tormentor of Islamic world in general.

Let us completely disregard those bland reassurances couched in tasteless language by the government spokesman on Pak-US relations and state bluntly the bare factual truth on the subject. The US does not believe that nuclear disarmament should be treated in the regional context. The main plank of its South Asia policy is to put economic, political and in certain circumstances, resort to military action to have Pakistan's nuclear programme dismantled. The US policy makers believe that India's military superiority in the region is in their vital national interest. To keep Pakistan politically unstable, militarily weak, and strategically vulnerable is a well-established American objective. This is a part of Washington's post-Cold War vision which regards Islam and Muslim countries as the greatest threat to its hegemony.

The US policy on Kashmir is a curious mixture of pseudo-idealism and expediency, but its basic purpose is to dilute Indian atrocities by accusing Pakistan of supporting militancy in the Valley. That policy is calculate to give the impression to the world that bloodshed and violence in Kashmir would stop, if Islamabad stays away from the conflict. This is a subtle way of strengthening New Delhi's hand on the Kashmir issue. Whenever and wherever Pakistan wants to acquire weapons and technology even of defensive fail to understand what is the purpose of Defence Secretary's visit to the country. Frankly speaking, we do not see any point in having discussions on trivial issues when the essential contradictions between the two sides are so pronounced. The only subject which could have been of some interest to our countrymen was the refund of money we paid for F-16 aircraft. That subject leaves no room for compromise since US officials did not hide their intentions to link the refund with the nuclear issue: a linkage utterly unacceptable to Pakistan.

Mr Perry is an unwelcome visitor. He is advised to stay at home.

Editorial on 'Apprehensions'

BK0201110295 Karachi NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 31 Dec 95 p 10

[Editorial: "The U.S. Defense Secretary's Visit and Apprehensions About Kashmir, the NPT, and Gwadar"]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Farooq Leghari has rejected fears that the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] will be signed during the U.S. defense secretary's visit to Pakistan. The prime minister and other government figures have been saying constantly that the U.S. defense secretary's visit has nothing to do with either handing Gwadar over to the United States, or turning Karachi into Hong Kong. There is no reason why the nation is not believing what the government leaders are saying repeatedly. It seems there is something wrong. Otherwise, why did U.S. Government leaders, including the defense secretary, suddenly fell in love with Pakistan and are taking the trouble to visit one at a time?

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The doubts and apprehension about Gwadar have intensified particularly since Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's secret meeting with Sultan Qabus last week in Muscat, capital of Oman, which is adjacent to Balochistan. Muslim Arab countries of the Middle East have been forced one at a time to bow to Israel under the new United States world order. First, President Sadat was forced to conclude a deal with Israel at Camp David. Then Yasir 'Arafat was compelled to remain content with city council-level powers in two towns. Now, following King Hassan of Morocco, Jordan's King Husayn has been made the latest prey of the new world order. He signed a peace agreement with Israel in the presence of President Clinton.

The day is not very far off when Pakistan will be coerced into accepting the third option on the Kashmir issue and having a ban imposed on its nuclear program, thereby making this country totally submissive to Israel. Pakistan has no direct dealings or disputes with Israel. Its enmity with Israel is due to Pakistan's support fo Arab Muslims, as Pakistan has opposed Zionism from its very beginning as a nation-state. Our first foreign minister, Sir Mohammad Zafarullah, was much more vocal against Jews at the United Nations than the Arabs were.

Now, since Rabin's secret visit to Muscat and the fresh rumors about Gwadar, people are more apprehensive, thinking that Israel's area of influence probably has spread to our frontiers. Before British rule, Gwadar was a part of present-day Pakistan. Then it was offered to Oman as a wedding gift. The region returned to Pakistan soon after its establishment when democracy was prevalent in this country. Negotiations are now going on with an Omani investor for the expansion of Gwadar's deep-sea port and other developmental activities there. It will be better if the matter is terminated right here and local investors are given the opportunity to participate in the development of Gwadar. There is no reason why local investors would not be willing to invest in protecting their independence and continued existence.

On the NPT issue too, the government should not budge from the national policy and should accept the nation's demand to revive the nuclear program as it will be in full conformity with national interests. This is the only means of defense we have against India. It is not known why people feel that the government is not telling the truth on the Kashmir and NPT issues and that the government is playing tricks and making some important decisions while keeping them in the dark. The nation cannot accept any decisions which contradict its aspirations. Therefore, the nation should not be forced to face any trials.

Reported Plan To Lessen Minister's Role in Afghanistan

BK0301125095 Islamabad PAKISTAN in Urdu 3 Jan 95 pp 8, 6

[Report by Shiraz Piracha]

[FBIS Translated Text] Peshawar—It has been learned from highly informed sources that in a bid to end the growing influence and grip of federal Interior Minister Nasirullah Khan Babar on Afghan affairs, some influential circles in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Iran, have prepared an alternative which includes a program to shift the capital of Afghanistan from Kabul to Jalalabad. It has been learned that these influential circles are persuading Golboddin Hekmatyar, former prime minister and leader of the Hezb-e Eslami-e Afghanistan, to accept the proposal. Some American organizations are reportedly supporting the plan.

Disclosing details of the secret plan to divide [as published] Afghanistan, informed sources have said that some Pakistani organizations and their officials which have been involved in Afghan affairs for the past 15 years are not happy with Interior Minister Nasirullah Khan Babar's interference in Afghan affairs. These Pakistani circles feel that it is in Pakistan's interest to try and extend its influence in Afghanistan through Pashtun-Afghan leadership and depend solely on Pashtun leaders. They feel the Pakistani interior minister is not only deviating from the policy which had been pursued by Pakistan since the Ziaul Haq era, but has also made contact with the Rabbani government, and through it, he has concluded agreements with Afghan commanders as well. He is now preparing a plan to construct highways to Central Asia via Afghanistan.

In view of the interior minister's policies, which enjoy the support of President Farooq Leghari and Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, these circles have prepared an alternative plan under which the city of Jalalabad, situated about 90 km from Pakistan-Afghan border region of Towr Kham, will be made the capital of Afghanistan. Arrangements in this regard and the execution of the plan will be assigned to a reliable leader, not Golboddin Hekmatyar, because some circles do not consider him as reliable. If Hekmatyar accepts this proposal of relinquishing his leadership, then the Afghan refugees living in North-West Frontier Province and other provinces of Pakistan will be sent back to Afghanistan, which will then have Jalalabad as its capital instead of Kabul.

It has been learned that U.S. policymakers, though not in favor of making Hekmatyar the leader, do want to see him included in any new setup. However, Hekmatyar is reported to have disagreed with the plan during his recent visit to Pakistan. If he disagrees, then the United States will support the UN plan for Afghanistan. In that case, the influential circles in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Iran will dissociate themselves from the United States and pursue their own plan.

Spokesman Urges Restraint for Russia, Chechnya

BK0401115495 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 4 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan has asked Russia and Chechnya to exercise restraint and resume talks in their

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conflict to achieve a peaceful settlement. A Foreign Office spokesman in Islamabad today said Pakistan is deeply concerned at the carnage and destruction resulting from the stepped up military operations in Chechnya. He said the civilian population of Groznyy has suffered enormous casualties and hundreds of thousands of people are reported to have been displaced or made refugees because of heavy bombardment of the city. He said the escalation of the conflict could increase instability in the entire Caucasus region.

Sri Lanka

Government, Guerrillas Reportedly Agree to Cease-Fire

LTTE Frees 4 Policemen

BK0301141195 Hong Kong AFP in English 1347 GMT 3 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, Jan 3 (AFP)—The Sri Lankan Government and Tamil Tiger guerrillas agreed on a cessation of hostilities following peace talks Tuesday [3 January], the leader of the government peace team told reporter here.

Kusumsiri Balapatabendi said it was now up to President Chandrika Kumaratunga to decide on a date to give effect to the agreement. "The talks were very cordial," he said after arriving here from the LTTE-held northern Jaffna town.

Balapatabendi, who is also Kumaratunga's secretary, said the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) freed four police prisoners to mark the resumption of peace talks.

He said the LTTE supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran had been "so happy" with the talks that he decided to free four policemen instead of the two they had originally planned.

The five-member government team would now brief Kumaratunga who is expected to announce the date of the ceasefire in her scheduled address to parliament on Friday, official sources said.

Tamil Groups React to Deal

BK0401080295 Hong Kong AFP in English 0741 GMT 4 Jan 95

[Report by Amal Jayasnghe]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] COLOMBO, Jan 4 (AFP)—An impending truce in Sri Lanka's Tamil secessionist war was cautiously welcomed Wednesday by Tamil groups, but analysts warned that peace may still be a long way off.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who lead the conflict that has cost more than 30,000 lives in 23 years, agreed Tuesday to halt hostilities. They freed four police captives to mark the resumption of stalled talks with the government.

However, rival Tamil political groups expressed fears that the ceasefire could lead to increased attacks on their cadres and leaders.

The Tigers have been accused of wiping out hundreds of rival Tamils seen as a threat to their leadership of the separatist struggle.

Anti-LTTE Tamil legislator Dharmalingam Sidhartan, whose deputy was killed by suspected Tiger gunmen on New Year's eve, said he wanted an "all encompassing ceasefire" with guarantees for their safety.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga is expected to announce the truce starting date when she opens the new session of parliament Friday, a member of the government peace team told reporters.

"We are in favour of a cessation of hostilities and we welcome an end to fighting. But some deterrent or a monitoring mechanism is necessary given the record of the LTTE," said L. Keethiswaran, the spokesman of the leftist Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF).

Previous ceasefires have collapsed and led to more violence. Analysts believe the latest truce may also fail unless it is coupled with full political negotiations.

Keethiswaran said the government should include substantive issues in future talks with the LTTE which wants an independent homeland called Eelam in the northeast of the Indian Ocean island.

So far, the LTTE and Kumaratunga's government have concentrated on day-to-day economic issues concerning civilians in the LTTE-held northern Jaffna peninsula rather than political negotiations.

Kumaratunga offered a 39 billion rupee (780 million-dollar) economic package for the peninsula, where the Tigers effectively run a separate state with their own police, administration and communications. But military analysts said the money could not be spent unless there was an agreement on a settlement.

The euphoria of chief government delegate Kusumsiri Balapatabendi was not shared by many analysts who believe the Tigers were probably using the talks to gain propoganda mileage.

Both sides were keen to have an agreement ahead of a visit by Pope John Paul II from January 20.

Balapatabendi told reporters that LTTE supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran was "so happy" with the talks he

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ordered the release of four constables instead of two originally planned to mark the talks.

However, the elusive Tiger chief did not take part in the one-day talks.

But Tuesday's meeting did revive the stalled peace process of Kumaratunga, a member of the majority Sinhalese community, who has vowed to seek a political solution to Tamil demands.

"The silver lining is the President's committment to solve this problem," said a Tamil leader who did not want to be named said. "We are not sure if the others also share the same concern."

Kumaratunga started peace efforts after winning elections last August. A first round of talks with the LTTE was held on October 13.

The second round, scheduled for October 24, was suspended after the LTTE was implicated in a bomb attack which killed opposition leader Gamini Dissanayake and 57 others at a rally.

DPLF Vice President Kandasamay Assassinated

BK0101083595 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 1 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Sri Lanka, the vice president of the Democratic People's Liberation Front [DPLF], Mr. Karavai Kandasamay, was shot dead in Colombo yesterday by unidentified gunmen. A spokesman of the party said Mr. Kandasamay was killed at his Dehiwala residence when the assailants set off a minor explosive device and opened fire. His daughter was seriously wounded in the attack.

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